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Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

November 10, 1989 / 45th year of publication / No. 2187

Conference calls for covenant on the environment

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — A capacity attendance of members and friends of Citizens for Public Justice-Ontario kicked off a major emphasis on communal concern for the environment in a one-day seminar in Toronto.

Under the theme "Our World Belongs to God: Toward a New Life Standard" 110 people from Sarnia, Sudbury, St. Catharines, Ottawa and points in between stressed the biblical theme of covenant to commit themselves to living more responsibly in the face of worldwide pollution and despoiling of the land.

The excitement generated by the seminar became clear when 21 different individuals and groups offered to set up a similar seminar in their own communities, using key elements from the pilot seminar in Toronto.

A five-page "Creation Liturgy" compiled by Bert Hielema of Tweed and led by Harry Kits, CPJ's Executive Director, set the tone of biblical reflection, confession of our sins and commitment that carried through the day. The day's activities were punctuated by spirited singing that expressed communal conviction.

Juggling in pain

In a striking keynote speech Richard Middleton, chaplain at Brock University, effectively used two songs of Bruce Cockburn, "Radium Rain" and "Planet of the Clowns," as metaphoric themes to drive home the human dimensions of blame and restoration.

"Concern is not enough!" said Middleton. "We need the desperation and longing that Cockburn expresses, even though it's painful to face our own participation in correcting things." He pointed out that the clown as a figure relieves the heaviness of responsibility, after all, the juggling clown is permitted to drop the balls once in a while. The clown is also a figure of Jesus, pointing to the new creation he brings.

After lunch a panel of creative and committed younger people showed how appropriate ways of living can be more responsible in our use of limited resources. This was followed by brainstorming by groups of 10 people at each table.

A feature of the afternoon was a Bible study by Mark VanderVennen of Cobourg which showed that God still relates to people and

See **GOD** — p. 2

Thinkbit

A generous and just person trusts the Lord and will have no fear of bad news.

From: Psalm 112

Ontario deacons get the book thrown at them

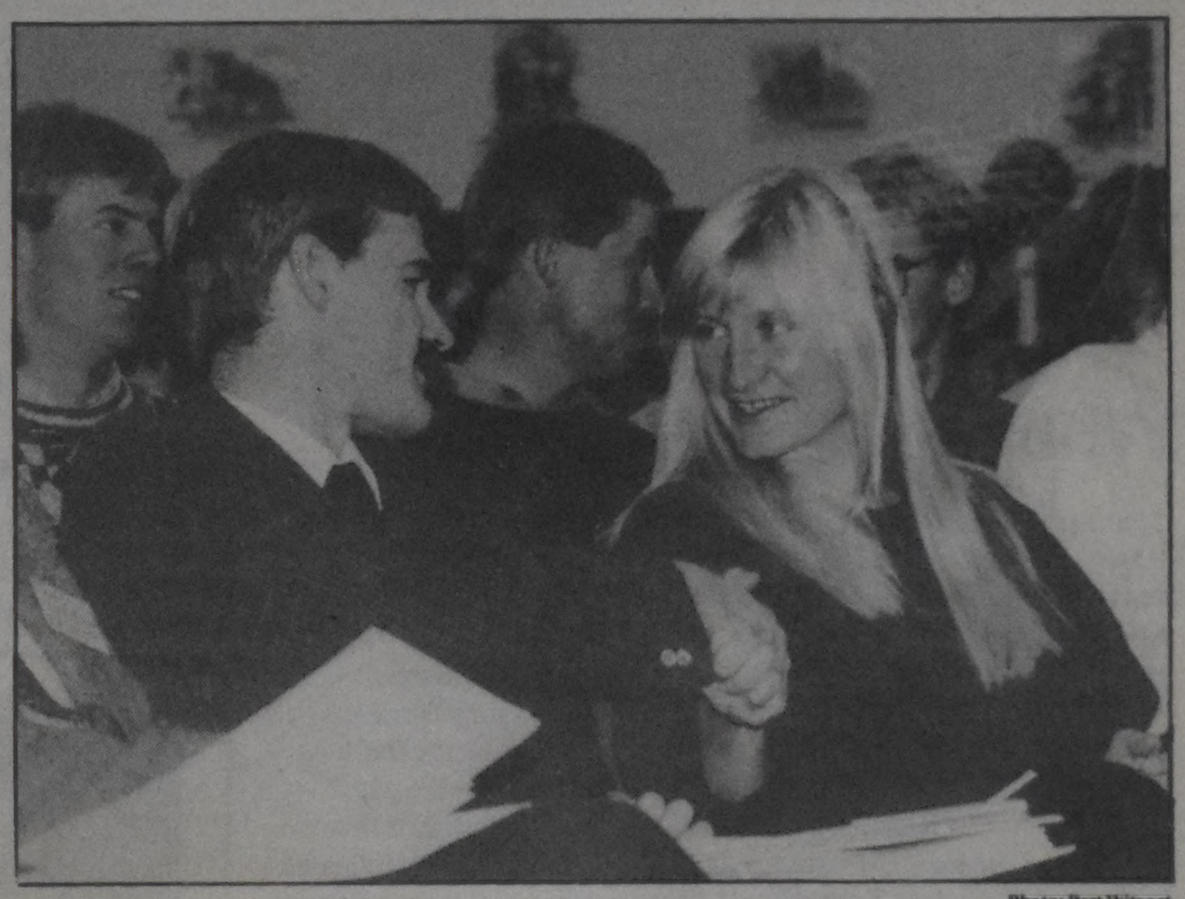

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Novice deacon Nancy Kleer meets a colleague during the workshop for new deacons.

Bert Witvoet

BRAMPTON, Ont. — Thirty years ago the All Ontario Diaconal Conference was organized to help deacons of Christian Reformed Churches in Ontario do their work more effectively. On October 21 this year, the same conference (AODC) handed out a book to its deacons that in a very systematic way explains the mandate and task of deacons and gives helpful advice for a host of situations deacons will face. The book goes a long way toward demonstrating that in a church that has two lay offices, the deacons are far better trained and organized than the elders.

The theme of the 30th conference, held in the John Knox Christian School, was "Let us encourage each other." The theme reflects that AODC has reached another milestone on its journey, says Peter Zwart, regional diaconal consultant. "When you travel far, you need encouragement."

A practical guide

Zwart took the meeting of 450 participants, not all of them deacons, on a tour of the past, "looking back for encouragement." He recalled that as early as 1972 AODC's board had raised the question, "You need a book, don't you?" It was to be a book not "filled with eternal principles," but a handy reference for concrete situations like making visits, encountering abuse, assessing financial needs and world relief. It took AODC's education committee many years of hard work, under the direction of co-ordinator Ben Vandezande to make that dream a reality.

Peter Nicolai, pastoral advisor of AODC, looked at the present and future for encouragement. "All Christians experience struggle," he told the conference, "and will find themselves at different times in either the position of giving encouragement or receiving it. When we are strong, we are called to use our God-given resources to encourage the discouraged. The consummation of our work will be in the return of Jesus Christ, when all our hopes will be fulfilled."

For most of the day, participants split into small groups, attending workshops on a variety of topics such as: visiting the elderly, prison ministry, refugee sponsorship.

See **WHAT** — p. 2

B.C. schools promote earthquake safety guidebook

The San Andreas fault.

Marian Van Til

VICTORIA, B.C. — The British Columbia Ministry of Education has a booklet which is a hot item in that province's schools these days: it's a "School Earthquake Safety Guidebook."

The 24-page guidebook was put together in September 1987. But 5,000 copies were recently reprinted and more widely distributed after the California earthquake because "local scientists say it's not a case of 'if' but 'when'" a major earthquake will occur along the B.C. coast, says the booklet's collator, Neil Jackson.

"We [in Victoria] are on a fault line," explains Jackson. "About a hundred kilometres offshore there's a major fault line. The whole coast could be in trouble." The guidebook notes that in 1946 an earthquake of 7.3 magnitude "caused serious damage in Courtenay on Vancouver Island." Fortunately, the quake hit on a Sunday morning when buildings were empty. Three years later a 7.0 magnitude quake damaged 30 schools in Seattle. Ten of those schools were condemned and closed. In 1965, a 6.5 earthquake damaged eight Seattle schools.

See **EARTHQUAKE** — p. 3

In this issue:

Two exceptional films are currently moving audiences . . . . . p. 6
Remembrance Day: a time to question civil religion and cherish hard-won freedom . . . . . pp. 12-13
Poetry by Beatrice Vandervelde p. 20

God relates to people and the environment through covenant

... continued from page 1.
environmental resources through the structure of covenant. He moved from quoting St. Francis and Emily Carr as saying, "The land and animals are very close to the heart of God," to showing how through his continuing covenant God blesses the land and also withholds his blessing. "Land is not a possession but an inheritance. You may not harm the land, but must replenish it," said VanderVennen. He called for an "economics of replenishment" to take the place of our "economics of extraction."

Concern for the environment was made graphic by a music and slide showing by Keith Martin of Spectrum Productions, which keyed in on a Pink Floyd song. A closing liturgy included commitments from the meeting's discussion groups to live more responsibly with the earth's resources.

The CPJ-sponsored public meeting effectively spoke to the question with which Bert Hielema, co-ordinator of the day's activities, opened the meeting: "The car is a technological extension of the foot, and missiles are the extension of the fist, but where is the extension of the heart?"

The conclusion which conferees drew is that Christians and their commitment must be the heart. As Middleton put it, "We must not drop the ball that has now come into our court."

Photo: Robert VanderVennen

Speaker Richard Middleton confers with conference organizer Jennifer Harris at CPJ's environment conference.

What does a deacon do?

... continued from page 1.
Ben Vandezande led a workshop for new deacons. About 90 new deacons gathered in the school's library to focus briefly on the question, "What does a deacon do?"

Lawyer Nancy Kleer (see picture), of the First Christian Reformed Church of Toronto, attended the workshop for new deacons. She described her feelings on the day she was ordained. "I was totally without understanding what my job was. I was a little bit proud that I had been chosen to do this work. I was excited about the possibility of learning what stewardship means."

Vandezande suggested that deacons were chosen perhaps because of the gift of hospitality or of compassion. His workshop both opened up participants to the challenge that awaits them as well as reminded them that it is only the grace of God that can bring fruits on their work.

Newly appointed pastoral advisor Charles Fennema of Rehoboth CRC in Bowmanville closed the afternoon meeting in prayer.

Post Script: During the morning plenary meeting, Vandezande mentioned two car licence numbers to indicate that owners had left their lights on. He failed to mention a number belonging to the car of the editor of *Calvinist Contact*. When the editor left the school to attend another meeting in Brampton, his car battery was dead. Fortunately for him, he had just left a meeting where the gift of compassion stretched from wall to wall in abundant supply. It took one little cry of help to bring out a deacon with a car and battery filled to the brim with power. The theme "Let us encourage each other" had been demonstrated. Thank you, Henry Bonvanie. You have answered the question, "What does a deacon do?"

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Deacons, too, need leaders: from l-r: AODC executive secretary Ben Vandezande, president Dale Smith, CRWRC director of diaconal ministries Peter Zwart, and retiring pastoral advisor Peter Nicolai.

Close to the deadline — Fax it

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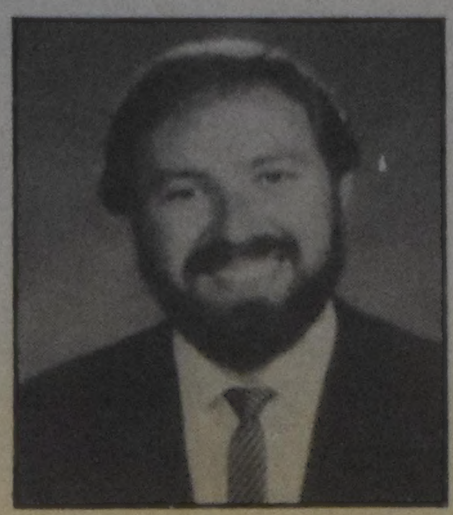
BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken, Jim Romahn



Examine your garbage

The comic strip *Cathy* caught my eye recently. Cathy is at the checkout counter and the cashier is asking her about her choice of bags in which to carry her groceries.

"Paper or Plastic?" asks the cashier.

"Hah!" replies Cathy self-righteously. "Paper, which decomposes in a week ... or plastic which decomposes in 400 years?? Of course I want paper!"

"Fine," retorts the cashier sarcastically. "I will pack your plastic sandwich bags, freezer bags, trash bags, household cleaner bottles, detergent bottles and soft drink bottles in a nice biodegradable paper bag."

The conversation drips with irony, which is what makes it humorous. It is a bind in which most of us are caught; we proudly and self-righteously avoid swallowing a gnat while the camel goes down without problem.

Although self-righteousness is the focus in this comic, the strip addresses another issue as well. The champions of biodegradable garbage bags as *the* answer to our garbage problem miss the boat in many ways. Leaving aside the issue of whether biodegradable plastic is desirable or not (and some early indications are that it is not), the boat that is missed is the amount and type of garbage *in* the garbage bag itself. That is the more critical garbage problem, it seems to me.

According to a recent *Globe and Mail* article, "fully half of the garbage [by volume — 30 per cent by weight] filling up Canada's dumps is nothing but packaging." If we stop to think about that for a moment, the irony of *Cathy* sinks in more fully. Packaging makes up half of the volume of garbage in Canada. That is a lot of packaging. That is a lot of material used to get goods from the factory to the home in good condition. Two questions arise in my mind: What is the packaging for? Is all that packaging necessary?

Marketing strategy

According to the manufacturing industry, the purpose of the packaging is to make sure that the product gets to the consumer in good condition. Without that guarantee, it would not be profitable to make it in the first place. And, claims the industry, consumers demand the amount and kind of packaging that is now in place; it is a consumer driven decision by the manufacturers.

Other people don't agree with the industry's assessment of the issue, however. Most packaging is, according to environmental groups like Friends of the Earth, primarily a way to *market* a product, to make it noticed on the shelf; product protection is secondary. Of course, keeping the product in good condition is desirable for marketing purposes; but a lot of packaging goes far beyond protection. It adds to our garbage without adding to the quality of the product.

This, I believe, is being unstewardly. This goes against the cultural mandate of developing and preserving creation. This goes against the idea that we are here to tend the garden and keep it. Part of our task in the Kingdom of God is to make sure that we don't misuse the resources that are part of creation. We may use them, but not abuse them.

Packaging used primarily for marketing purposes is a double abuse. First, the energy and material used to produce the packages are unnecessary. Secondly, the energy and land needed to dispose of those packages are unnecessary. It is truly a waste on both ends.

To help solve the garbage problem (and to overcome Cathy's problem) is to look past the product to the packaging. We must begin to refrain from buying certain products if they are wastefully, overly packaged. We must look to alternative products which can do the job, or reassess our need for that product. We must make more use of bulk buying. We must take our plastic grocery bags back to the store and reuse them. We must cut down on that half of the garbage called packaging. Such actions are small but significant ones in the Kingdom of God.

Clarence Joldersma teaches science at Smithville District Christian High School, Smithville, Ont.

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue in noise so rude against me? asks Queen Gertrude in *Hamlet*. There was a lot of ugly tongue-wagging all over the country in the past week. As the Meech Lake debate heated up like Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, civility among the participants in the discussion diminished. There were angry words from sea to sea. His Majesty promoted his book with a harsh fire and brimstone anti-Meech speech. Premier Bourassa, like a veteran drill sergeant told everybody to line up behind Meech Lake or else. The Reform Pary poisoned the unsavory stew a bit more by spicing it with a dangerous dose of anti-Quebec venom, and racist resolutions. Newfoundland's legislature is going to revoke that province's signature under the Meech agreement. Premier Devine proclaimed Meech Lake dead and Manitoba's political leaders were portrayed in *Le Devoir* in Klu Klux Klan attire; and to top it all off Wilhelmus Maria VanderZalm's Socreds turned their convention into an anti-Semitic demonstration with Wilhelmus himself taking a leading role. It was not one of our better weeks.

★★★★

Monsieur himself was far away from the melee in sunny Costa Rica where he committed Canada to membership in the Organization of American States. Previous governments have always refused to become a member of that organization out of fear of getting mixed up in the seemingly endless conflicts between the U.S. and various Latin American countries. Monsieur has no such fear of being involved in diplomatic conflicts, and he argued that it had become increasingly difficult to deal with hemispheric problems such as environmental pollution and drug smuggling without being directly engaged with OAS. Monsieur was careful not to take any risks in that unknown territory, and he had two bullet-proof limousines flown to Costa Rica. One for him and one for Mila, perhaps?

★★★★

Although there was a noisy anti-GST demonstration on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, the debate about Finance Minister Wilson's scheme was only a slightly disturbing background noise in the great Meech Lake fortissimo performance. Don Blenkarn, chairperson of the House committee that took it on the chin all through the country will propose a reduction of the percentage, but at the same time he is going to recommend to Wilson to tax the sale of all houses, not only new ones. It is estimated that this could increase the GST revenue by between $1 billion and $2 billion. Blenkarn's proposal found no favour with the Canadian Real Estate Association. That organization was about as enthusiastic about Blenkarn's recommendation as migrating birds about Canadian winters.

★★★★

A House of Commons committee began hearings on the future of Canada Post. The minister responsible for that crown corporation has said that the idea of selling Canada Post is an "appropriate consideration." Appropriate to him and his government probably, but the NDP will surely not rise to applause. Nor will a whole lot of other people. The same minister, Harvie Andre, also vetoes capping credit cards interest rates. Does this minister really have an appropriate title: Consumer Affairs? One might suggest a change to Corporation Affairs! The ministers, by the way, approved a 16 per cent wage hike for their ministerial assistants. No fuss, with the House or committees, just an *entre nous* cabinet decision.

★★★★

Returning from Kuala Lampur where she disagreed with everybody in sight, Mrs. Thatcher ran into a slight difference of opinion with her Exchequer and economic adviser. As is the case in most disagreements to which Mrs. Thatcher is party, the party of the second part lost the argument and resigned. There are however, an increasing number among her own Conservatives who would be eager to offer the Iron Lady a golden handshake and best wishes for the future.

★★★★

Israel, in addition to South Korea, seems to be interested in our Candu nuclear reactor. Israel, however, is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Any eventual sale would also cause quite a diplomatic disturbance. The Arab nations would also cause quite a diplomatic disturbance. The Arab nations would not react kindly to such a sale, and, moreover, there are rumours about Israeli-South African co-operation in the development of nuclear arms. It is widely believed that Israel already has nuclear weapons.

★★★★

The developments in East Germany, and the winds of change blowing whole sections of the Iron Curtain into smithereens, not only cause worries about German re-unification among NATO allies, the comrades of the Warsaw Pact are not entirely exuberant about that prospect either. The East Bloc foreign ministers declared that "any discussion about altering Europe's post-World War II borders would destabilize the continent." It is clearly evident, though, that a new Europe is being born.

★★★★

The government of South Africa shows signs of coming to its senses. Seventy thousand people jammed a Soweto stadium in what obviously was an ANC pep rally. The government did not interfere. The hard line Communist government of Czechoslovakia has not yet given up on the intimidating rule of billy sticks and water cannons. Police in Prague dealt mercilessly with pro-democracy demonstrators.

★★★★

Stewardesses or flight attendants, too, can tell strange stories. On my recent trip one of the women told me that on an earlier flight she had distributed chewing gum before departure. One passenger asked her what the purpose was of such KLM benevolence. It is to help against earaches, she had explained. About seven hours later when she announced the imminent landing of the plane a lady frantically waved for her attention. She hurried to be of assistance, and the passenger asked: Can I take that stuff out of my ears now?

Carl Tuyl is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, Kingston, Ont.

Earthquake safety programs recommended

... continued from page 1.

Jackson, an architect by trade, oversees a variety of activities in the Ministry of Education. He says he "pulled together, scrounged and [laughing] plagiarized whenever possible a lot of good, mostly American material" to put the guidebook together. Much of the material was applicable, as it stood, to the Canadian situation but some of it he adapted for Canadian use. The ministry hopes that B.C.'s 75 public school districts will use the booklet in the province's 1,600 public schools, further adapting it to their local situations as necessary. Though there wasn't much reaction to the guidebook when it first came out, "we know a lot of schools are now using it," says Jackson.

The guidebook recommends that every school district establish an earthquake safety program and suggests how that be done. The program would include five major elements: implementing earthquake drills, introducing staff training programs, identifying and correcting hazards (windows, lights, chemicals, basements, equipment; classroom and neighbourhood hazards), preparing a local response plan, and preparing a local communications plan.

The booklet offers a checklist of things a student should do before, during and after an earthquake. *Before* an earthquake he or she must: "Learn what to expect and what to do during an earthquake; identify hazards in the classroom, school, home; participate in earthquake drills; know the name and address of your guardian, if designated by your parent(s)."

During a quake he or she should: "Follow teacher's instructions; TAKE COVER under a desk or table; ASSUME "CRASH" POSITION [which the student learned during the drills]; COUNT to 60; if out of the classroom, take cover in a doorway in the "CRASH" position, count to 60, join the nearest class when shaking stops."

After a quake, in addition to following the teacher or monitor's instructions, a student is told to "wear shoes; put on identification tag; comfort and reassure other students; DO NOT use an elevator; DO NOT re-enter school without permission; DO NOT go home without permission," being aware that "your parent or guardian may be delayed in coming for you." And last, students are encouraged to "talk about what has happened."

Equally detailed checklists are provided for all personnel associated with the school: teachers, principals, parents/guardians, maintenance staff and bus drivers.

The B.C. Ministry of Education is confident that if schools are ready with such information and have conducted periodic drills and evaluations, many young lives will be saved when "the big one" occurs in B.C.

The "School Earthquake Safety Guidebook" may be obtained by writing or calling Neil Jackson at the B.C. Ministry of Education, Victoria; phone (604) 387-4611.

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Editorial

Help the Ghabras come to Canada

Have you ever tried to save someone's life and found that the only thing that stands between you and success is a bureaucratic machine? Shirley and Bassam Madany have. Bassam Madany is the broadcast minister to the Arabic world for the Back to God Hour, the radio ministry of the Christian Reformed Church. He and his wife are trying to rescue the Khalil Al Ghabra family, (father, mother and four sons) from certain danger (See news item in C.C. Feb. 10, 1989). The family has been placed under a death threat if they return to Lebanon or Syria. At the moment, the Ghabras are in West Germany where they have been refused refugee status because the West German government does not think that Christians are persecuted in Lebanon or Syria.

Officially they are right. Both Lebanon and Syria have significant enclaves of Christians. In Lebanon, Christians have been the dominant force in government. So how can there be persecution of a Christian family in these countries? What official government documents do not show is that persons or families who once were Muslim and have converted to Christianity will be persecuted, if not by the government then by their Muslim relatives and friends. Muslims are under obligation of an Islamic law of apostacy to harm or kill those who leave the Muslim faith.

In fact, the Ghabras have received notice that their relatives on both sides have met and have made a decision to put them to death if they ever get back to the Middle East.

Intervention

The Madanys, who are in the business of converting people in the Arab world to Christianity, feel burdened by this turn of events. For that reason, Shirley Madany, especially, has made it her prime concern to pursue all kinds of avenues to save the Ghabra family from being sent back to Syria or Lebanon. Since she and Bassam have so far failed to persuade the West German government that the Ghabras should be granted refugee status, they have tried other avenues. The most hopeful of them seemed to be the possibility of having the Canadian government accept the Ghabras as genuine refugees.

So, the Madanys got people like Back to God Hour representative Jack Thalen of Guelph, Ont., Gerald Vandezande of Citizens for Public Justice in Toronto and Peter Zwart of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee in Burlington, Ont., who is very much involved with refugee work, to intervene on their behalf. But the Canadian government seems to be as blind to the reality of the Ghabra family's situation as the West German government.

Same blinders

Just consider the following. On February 8 of this year, Bassam Madany sent a letter to the Honourable Barbara McDougall, Minister of Employment and Immigration. The letter followed attempts by Jack Thalen through his MP Dr. William C. Winegard, to obtain permission to allow the Ghabra family to immigrate to Canada. In the letter, Madany explained that "Muslim regimes from the beginning of the seventh century have *never* allowed for the possibility of any Muslim subject renouncing his or her faith and accepting either Christianity or Judaism." They explained that the Ghabra family, now living in Hagen, West Germany, fled to Europe to escape persecution, and that the Christian Reformed Church of Guelph was willing to sponsor this family.

On July 19 of this year, Dr. William Winegard wrote the Honourable Barbara McDougall again regarding the Ghabra family. Here follows the letter he received from Ms. McDougall.

September 29, 1989
Dear Bill:

Thank you for your letter of July 19, 1989, regarding the Khalil Al-Ghabra family (File No. HQ6-63728). I apologize for the delay in responding.

Following previous representations received on behalf of the Al-Ghabra family, I asked my officials to again research any difficulties that converted Christians in Syria could face. My officials advised me that the Syrian constitution does not give official preference to one religion over another. Christians are able to practise their religion in Syria. In fact, some members of the Syrian government are Christians. In view of this information, there is no reason to conclude that Mr. Al-Ghabra, who is a Christian, would have grounds to fear returning to his country based on the definition of a Convention refugee. After having carefully reviewed all aspects of this case, I am satisfied that the decision of the visa officials in Bonn, West Germany, to refuse Mr. Al-Ghabra's application, was correct.

As the Reverend Bassam Michael Madany, Minister of Arabic Broadcasting, of The Back to God Hour/Faith 20 radio ministry, has also written to me concerning the Al-Ghabra family, I have taken the liberty of forwarding him a copy of this reply.

I hope the above information alleviates your concerns. Thank you again for writing.

Yours sincerely,
Barbara McDougall

It goes without saying that Shirley and Bassam Madany are extremely disappointed and frustrated by this answer, especially by the closing line "I hope the above information alleviates your concerns."

Breaking through

How is it possible that after all the explanations given, Ms. McDougall still does not understand what is at stake here? Shirley Madany thinks that the minister is too well protected by bureaucrats who do not allow her to see what the real situation is like. Somehow, bureaucratic systems cannot see beyond official documents and public statements by foreign governments. They are unable to appreciate the subtleties of social and religious organisms.

The Madanys have not given up. But they need help. This is where the hands, feet, eyes and ears of the body of Christ come in. Please, reader of *Calvinist Contact*, write to the Minister of Employment and Immigration, write to your local MP. Let there be a flood of protest coming from the Reformed community so that the power of faithful Christians breaks down the walls of the Ottawa bureaucracy. If 200 C.C. readers write, that will make a tremendous impact. If *all* 7,000 subscribers write, something *has* to pass through the walls and from the desks of paper shufflers to Ms. McDougall.

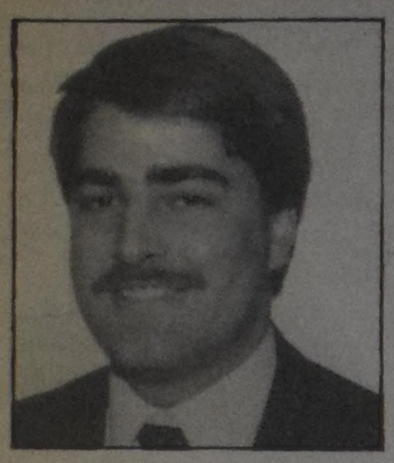
The address of the Minister is: The Honourable Barbara McDougall, Minister of Employment and Immigration, Ottawa, Canada K1A 0J9.

Remember, in as much as you have done it unto the Ghabra family, who courageously turned their backs on the misleading religion of Islam and turned their faces towards the God of love and salvation, you have done it unto Christ.

BW

See letter on page 5 →

FETISHES/DAVE FEDDES



How the mighty have fallen!

Nebuchadnezzar's cabinet had no choice. The king had gone to the palace lawn for his noon lunch — and was eating the lawn. Granted, Nebuchadnezzar had been a brilliant general, an able administrator, and an authoritative king. But when a king thinks he is a cow, he must be put out to pasture.

Daniel summarized the rise and fall of Nebuchadnezzar this way: *The Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendour. Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes.* (Daniel 5:18-21)

God's sovereignty over arrogant rulers is especially fascinating these days. In 1974 Richard Nixon came crashing down in the Watergate scandal, just two years after the largest electoral victory in U.S. history. Toppled with him was Charles Colson, his notorious hatchet man. The arrogant Colson was born again through Jesus, not with a lust for power, but with a desire to help the poor and imprisoned.

It has been a tough few years for dictators the world over. Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos fled the Philippines. Duvalier's reign ended in disgrace and exile. Noriega's grip on Panama may soon be broken.

Unforeseen events

Communist dictatorship has also fallen on hard times. Gorbachev's reforms are barely keeping up with the demands of Soviet ethnic groups. Mao's legacy in China has faded considerably, with more change and unrest brewing. The officially banned Solidarity movement arose, trouncing Jaruzelski's Communist party in Poland's general elections. Hungary's Communist party voted itself out of existence just a few decades after Soviet tanks had propped up a dictatorship there.

The kingdoms and rulers of today's world are no more difficult for God to topple or raise up than in Daniel's time. That is clear from the Bible, from the history books and from current events.

But if Canadian Christians feel smug at witnessing political upheaval in other parts of the world, they had better listen to Nebuchadnezzar's lesson: "Those who walk in pride he is able to humble" (Daniel 4:37). Dictators may be falling right and left. That is no reason to be smug. For our own welfare depends on God's grace, and our own nation is moving ever closer to moral bankruptcy.

We delight in God's sovereignty over the nations. Now we must listen to God's warning; "Renounce your sins by doing what is right, and your wickedness by being kind to the oppressed. It may be that then your prosperity will continue" (Daniel 4:27).

Dave Feddes is pastor of Westmount Christian Reformed Church, Strathroy, Ont.

Letters

Two questions further the evolution discussion

It was good to see a positive and constructive piece on the theory of evolution (C.C. Sept. 1).

Robert VanderVennen rightly makes a distinction between macro-evolution, in which new species are taken to evolve, and micro-evolution, in which this is not the case. The latter, it seems, attracts a great deal of research activity. Is there evidence for natural limits to biological change? That is, are there natural limits which prevent one species from evolving into another?

Darwin himself suggested that pigeons, despite extensive changes, invariably reverted to type. Yet, the limits to change in other species (such as some plants) seem rather poorly defined.

I, for one, would love to see a (readable) article on this topic, written by one of our Christian biologists.

Theology or science?

While I am suggesting work for others to do, let me introduce quite a different matter. It is obvious that the theory of evolution has broad implications, extending also to theology. A number of overtures to the Christian Reformed Church synod of this year point out that this theory should not be endorsed at our denominational college, on the basis of the Bible and our church creeds.

But how does one show the theory of evolution to be wrong? On the one hand, those of us who hold orthodox views (among which I count myself) regard scripture to indicate that this theory does not represent past events. Yet, others may point out that this theory is primarily a theory in the realm of the natural sciences and that it must, therefore, also be shown wrong on scientific grounds.

As a scientist, and in any case, as one who firmly believes that we must read the book of nature correctly, I must attach some importance to the latter point of view.

How then does one properly test the validity of this theory? Is it sufficient to do so on scriptural grounds, i.e. do (good) theology, or must one of necessity do (good) science? This question is, I believe, part of the mandate of the 1991 CRC synodical committee. In the meantime, I would like to see it discussed on the pages of *Calvinist Contact*.

John G. Cook
Gloucester, Ont.

Greed shatters all romanticism

"From time to time it is good to give answers." Reading your well written article "Understanding the Food System" I could not resist to express my feelings about your suggestions.

I am in my mid-70s and have heard that theme since I was still in grade school. Your wording might differ from others, but your romanticism is the same. Whenever I read articles like yours, it reminds me of Steinbeck's words: like teenagers with newly discovered sin, thinking that they have invented it.

Maybe I should put the blame on Kneen, but I think you too are wrong in admiring this line of thinking.

What is the alternative for free trade? A closed system of state controlled distribution? Just look at what is happening in Eastern Europe. Look what is happening in the whole socialist movement, with its corrective trend toward more liberal trade.

Is it proper to even speak of a "food system"? Not in the sense that it is a constructed or designed system. It grew organically by filling the need of those who wanted or needed to "make their living" away from direct agriculture. To meet that need, bartering or trading came into being.

This form of economy showed from day one that it had to deal with a nasty factor: people were greedy, not only by habit, but seemingly by nature. That factor has been denied by secular idealists and is often overlooked by Christians.

The individual is greedy or prone to greed and a group of individuals or corporation is prone to greed, because its parts are prone to greed, yes not only greed but prone "to all evil."

This is where checks and balances come in. This is where the powers to be have a task: "to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency" (Article 36, *Belgic Confession*).

Profit is needed. Motivation is needed. But the individual and the corporation is never ethically allowed to be driven by need but is requested by God to be motivated to serve His glory only.

Janderk Haalboom
Waterloo, Ont.

Hagen, West Germany
October 10, 1989

Beloved father, Rev. Bassam M. Madany:

Hearty greetings. We are asking God to keep you well.

Beloved father, I am writing to you this letter. This is a very difficult situation in which we find ourselves.

As far as Canada is concerned, I have my two children, Muna and Fadi (aged 15 and 11) who are under 18 years. If it is possible for them to go to Canada by themselves we would be so glad. We are here in Germany without any hope of being able to remain here. We have spent four-and-one-half years and still we have not gone to court. We are not allowed to work and our situation is extremely difficult, causing much personal anxiety and my own ill health. We hope you are aware of all that.

Thank you for all your concern. We leave you in the protection of God the Father, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Greetings to all from the Khalil Al-Ghabra family, your kinfolk in the Lord.

[a translation]

Photo: courtesy Shirley Madany

The Ghabra family, persecuted for the faith.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

A Dry White Season

Rated AA
Stars Donald Sutherland, Janet Suzman, Jurgen Prochnow, Zakes Mokae, Susan Sarandon, Marlon Brando
Based on the novel by Andre Brink; directed by Euzhan Palcy

"The urge to be left alone" — that's the force that drives Afrikaners, South Africa's "white tribe," says celebrated novelist Andre Brink. Brink's reputation as a white South African novelist today is somewhat like Alan Paton's *(Cry the Beloved Country)* has been to several previous generations. As an Afrikaner, Brink knows intimately the mindset of that group, but cannot share the majority's bid for "apartness."

"In almost every sphere one finds evidence of an old Afrikaner order breaking down. There are still those whose lives are ruled primarily by ideology, the 'super Afrikaners,' while others have adopted more open value systems," Brink wrote in an October 1988 article for *National Geographic*.

It is the tragic result — for blacks, and for whites in a much different way — of the Afrikaners resistance to an inevitable new order that is the subject of this gut-wrenching film based on one of Brink's books.

Canadian Donald Sutherland plays Benjamin Du Toit, an easy-going school teacher who lives a comfortable if naive life which revolves around his family: wife, adolescent son, and a married daughter and her family. He mingles easily with the blacks he meets, and respects his school's black janitor. But the lives of those blacks — and the janitor's life and that of his family — are something Du Toit knows nothing of and never speculates about. Life is good and life goes on for him; he need not become involved in "their" problems.

Just before the now infamous Soweto riots and massacre (1976), when the janitor's adolescent son is hauled from a group of chanting students, brought to the police station and savagely caned, Du Toit cannot bring himself to believe that the beating was unjustified. And he counsels the janitor, "Let it go. You can't do anything about it."

As the troubles heat up and hundreds of *children* are gunned down and/or tortured by government police, among them the janitor's son, Du Toit, like many of his fellow Afrikaners, is mostly unaware of the atrocities. But a faint uneasiness starts to overtake him. He inquires at the police station about the janitor's son; ever so gradually he starts to disbelieve the answers he is given.

No turning back

When the janitor himself is taken into custody for participating in an attempt to get affidavits from those who witnessed police brutality, Du Toit is finally, deeply disturbed and decides justice must be served. It is a decision that will profoundly alter his life and for which he will have to pay a great price.

He sees, at first bit by bit, and then, once he has ventured from the shelter of his white world into a torrent of unstoppable images and experiences, the truth of his renowned lawyer friend Ian McKenzie's adage: "In most countries justice and law are distant cousins; in South Africa they aren't even on speaking terms."

The strengths of this powerfully disturbing film are many, not the least of them the keen acting talents of Donald Sutherland (and in a short but captivating part, Marlon Brando as McKenzie). Sutherland lets the part come to him, allowing his character to evolve before our eyes. His acutely expressive eyes catch the tiniest subtleties of emotion. We *feel* Du Toit's initial mild-mannered apathy, his growing uneasiness with the life he had never questioned, and its flowering into an activated outrage against not just a few ugly incidents, but against the system of apartheid.

Without Brink's novel and Euzhan Palcy's direction, though, *A Dry White Season* wouldn't be what it is. Brink, having been reared in the kind of Afrikaner world in which his white characters live and move, gives us an insider's glimpse into what motivates those enigmatic, "godly" people. But having come out of that world and into the "other" South Africa, Brink also has an intense empathy for the blacks of his country. Palcy, as a black woman, focuses unflinchingly on the blacks' horrible ordeal in the aftermath of Soweto. Both she and Brink, from their different perspectives, understand the rage — usually (remarkably!) controlled — the despair, the hopelessness. ("Hope," one of the film's black characters tell Du Toit, "is a white man's word.")

While there are faint signs of hope in South Africa these days, the *system* is far from dismantled and the dry white season hasn't ended. Until it has, this film will serve as a forceful reminder of what can happen when God-fearing people value law (and their own comfort) more than justice.

The Bear

Rated PG
Stars Jack Wallace, Tcheky Karyo, Andre Lacombe
Written by Gerard Brach; directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud

A few weeks after we told readers that the Japanese live-action animal film for children, *The Adventures of Milo and Otis*, was in a class by itself, another superb picture featuring animals has arrived on the scene, this time from France. This one has a message aimed at adults, though children should see it too — as long as adults help them understand that in the real world many animals are predators.

Jean-Jacques Annaud dislikes extensive dialogue. But he can afford to because he has proven in previous films that he is remarkably adept at making pictures "talk" (and at choosing the right music to enhance that visual "speech"). Nowhere is that more true than in *The Bear*.

Annaud feels great kinship with the bear, this huge, intelligent mammal which plays, forages, mates, raises its young, and fights for survival in ways that stir us humans to sympathetic recognition. But he is alarmed by our common inclination to see ourselves *outside of* rather than a part of the environment — that attitude has allowed the extinction of countless animals and their habitats. While Annaud sees his connection to mammals like the bear in evolutionistic terms, he's right in seeing a connection between ourselves and all living things. His movie is elegant testimony to that connection.

The Bear is set in 19th century British Columbia (though filmed in the Alps), based on a 1916 novel by American hunter-turned-conservationist James Oliver Curwood. It has no narration and very little dialogue. For most of its 90 minutes we watch — sometimes amazed, sometimes anxious, always enthralled (and mostly from the bears' point of view) — as an orphaned cub attaches himself to a crusty old male and together they go about simply being bears, which includes facing the threat of human invaders.

Awe-inspiring

This is no cute Walt Disney flick. These bears, though "actors," are not forced to try to be humans in fur. And the uncanny result is that their created majesty is all the more evident, allowing us to identify strongly with their struggle to survive.

Annaud's great respect for the bears inspired phenomenal patience in him. He had a difficult time finding a bear tame enough to work with but primitive enough to have maintained its feral dignity after constant contact with humans.

In Doug Seuss he found an uncommon trainer who kept such a bear, an adult male kodiak named Bart. (The cub, Youk, presented little problem because of his youth.) It took Seuss nearly two years to get Bart to understand how to limp as if injured. But Annaud was willing to wait.

The resulting film will undoubtedly stand as a landmark in its genre for a long time to come. Annaud has said that he hopes that people [who have taken animals for granted] will never feel the same about animals after seeing *The Bear*. If they do, it's not his fault.

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Arts

Music review

Covenant of Love

Marian Van Til
Sung by Heather Kikkert Produced and arranged by Michael Vieira; recorded at Soundpath Productions, Oakville, Ont. Available on cassette ($12.00) from H.K. music, R.R.#1, Grassie, ON L0R 1M0.

Heather (Veenhof) Kikkert began singing in public some 10 years ago with her high school friend Helen Suk. Heather and Helen produced one recording together (in 1983), and now each has a solo recording [see review of Helen Suk-Louws' *Fall on the Stone*, C.C. May 5, 1989].

In talking with Heather one realizes that this recording is intimately intertwined with what is most important to her: her faith and her family. The recording evolved over a two-year period from the title song which Kikkert wrote for the baptism of her and her husband Henry's first child.

She says having that child made her begin to reflect on God's faithfulness, a steadfastness sealed in his covenant with his people. Out of that reflection the recording's theme gradually took shape: it would chronicle the life of our Saviour, Christ as the fulfilment of God's covenant.

So Side 1 begins with "Star Song" by McClung/Allen, a catchy nouveau Christmas carol. The style of this song, and the album generally, could be called Christian contemporary pop.

Kikkert's strong but sweet voice is backed up by synthesizer, electric piano, drums, bass, electric and acoustic guitar and four singers (including herself). The arrangements and accompaniments, fairly imaginative for the most part, are by Michael Vieira.

The second selection is a atypical of the album. It is John Michael Talbot's "Behold Now the Kingdom." Talbot's composition style is basically "folk" (Vieira arranged this one for guitar and synthesized flute, an appropriate choice) and his Catholicism lends his Sermon on the Mount text a certain "objective" universality — something several more evangelical, "personal faith" songs on the recording lack.

The third selection is unusual in another way. It is a modernized version of Johan Cruger's haunting 16th century hymn "Ah, Dearest Jesus." Though a tune this enduring can withstand almost anything (and this setting does capture something of the original), the sturdy melody and its gut-wrenching Passion text are ill-suited to the flitting staccato guitar, synthesizer, and the brushed drums which accompany it.

Side 1 concludes with two upbeat numbers which retell the Easter events and the disciples' reactions.

Side 2 begins with the admonition to "Proclaim the Glory of the Lord," a singable if somewhat ordinary melody by D. Lyles and N. Borup.

"If We Don't Believe," is a caution to Christians that we cannot afford to sit around thinking of heaven when "people are crying ..., children are dying who don't even know [Christ]." It is not only singable but has the kind of simple but compelling tune and thoughtful text which resurfaces often in one's mind.

Kikkert herself has written two of the recordings' songs: "Covenant of Love" and "Israel in Us," the latter which identifies modern Christians' failures to live up to Christ's name with Old Testament Israel's waywardness. Kikkert's songs are probably the most textually, rhythmically and melodically challenging on the recording and they deserve more careful listening.

Heather Kikkert, now a full-time mother with four children, sees her recording and the live singing she does locally as "more of a ministry than a hobby, though it's a hobby too." She aimed her recording primarily at a Christian audience — and her own Christian Reformed community — but hopes "it will also witness to unbelievers." The message is the key.

While not artistically profound, *Covenant of Love* exhibits a solid faith and a wholehearted attempt to express that faith and encourage others to trust God's covenant faithfulness. The recording will undoubtedly be appreciated by anyone who likes Christian Contemporary Music.

Disabled artist addresses his handicap in his art

ANCASTER, Ont. (RC) — Working from the experiences of his early childhood as well as his interest in early 20th century art movements, Canadian artist Gerard Pas objectively critiques "pure form" and "functional design." Through disassembling and reassembling familiar ambulatory aids, crutches and wheelchairs, he creates new sculptures and objects of art.

The works of Gerard Pas, which will be on exhibit at Redeemer College, Ancaster, later this month, have been shown extensively throughout Canada, Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. They are a statement on his own physical disability as a result of polio contracted in his infancy in Holland. "My work is also a critical analysis of certain failures of design and architecture to consider the human condition and the frailty of personkind," says Pas.

Powerful impact

Writer Ian Trowell says this about Pas in an article for the *London Free Press:* "He's producing powerful works by turning disadvantage to advantage ...; some are simple, others complicated. Humourous adaptations co-exist with painfully serious expressions ...; each work clearly reflects a particular facet of the artist's persona, while establishing a distinctive personality of its own."

In 1973 Pas enrolled in the "Special Art Program" at H.B. Beal Technical School in London. Later he studied independently with various established artists in Canada and Europe. In the late 1970s Pas actively participated in the western European art scene taking nihilism as his point of departure. Subsequently, through an association with Joseph Beuys, a spiritual dimension took root in his thinking and art. The ugliness of nihilism in his work began to be replaced by tension that resolved itself in beauty.

Pas and his wife and son live in London, Ont. He is a part-time faculty member at Redeemer College, where he teaches drawing and life drawing.

The exhibition of his works at Redeemer College, entitled "Deconstruction-Reconstruction," opens November 16 at 8 p.m. and continues until December 15.

For more information contact: Daina Doucet, Director, Community Relations, Redeemer College, (416) 648-2131.

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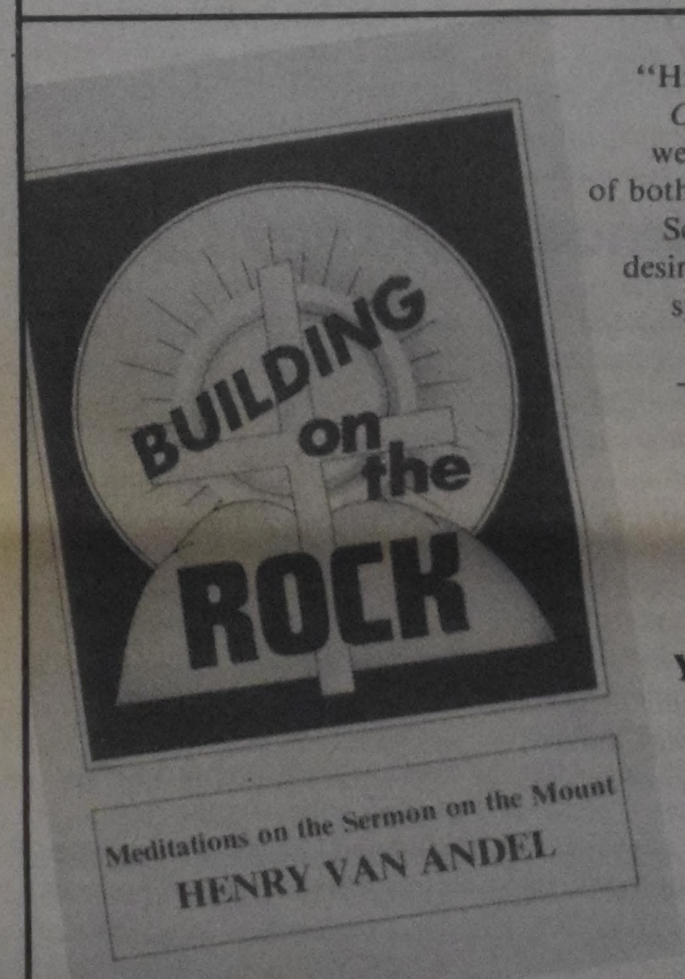

"His meditations in *Calvinist Contact* were an expression of both his love for the Scriptures and his desire to convey true spirituality to the readers."
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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Commentary: PTL scandal ends with a whimper

Doug Trouten

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — It looks as though Jim Bakker has been called to prison ministry. He's been found guilty on 24 counts of fraud and conspiracy and sentenced to 45 years in prison — which he will appeal.

After the sentencing was announced, Tammy Faye Bakker stood bravely in front of the courthouse and said, "It's not over until it's over." In case anybody's still in the dark about this, take it from me: it's over.

PTL is all but gone. The PTL cable network has become "The Inspirational Network," a situation where the names have been changed to protect the innocent. Heritage USA was sold to an Orthodox Jew. Even the hollow shell of "The Jim and Tammy show," which in fitting irony had been broadcast from a dying shopping mall in Florida, is going to be history.

Jim Bakker won't do hard time. He'll wind up at a minimum security federal prison with other embezzlers and cheats. But it will be prison just the same. No more private jet. No more lavish homes. No more designer suits. Just prison, where one day will be pretty much like another for years and years.

As for Tammy, aside from the occasional visit to Jim, how will she fill her time? She's talked about wanting to work in a doctor's office, or maybe in a courtroom. But both of these kinds of careers require skills beyond the ability to cry gushers at the drop of a check.

It's time to ask ourselves this question: What is the biggest tragedy of the PTL saga?

Is it that people who gave money to PTL for ministry had it used instead for gross excess? Perhaps, but we learned a lesson from that, and ministries are more concerned with accountability today than ever before.

Is it that innocent broadcast ministries have been unjustly tarred with the same brush as PTL? Possibly, but if the shakeup drives some high-cost low-return glamour ministries to take a hard look at what they're doing with God's money, we'll be better off.

Is it that the reputation of the Christian faith will suffer by it's connection with Bakker? Maybe, but if this drives the Body of Christ to be a little quicker about excising cancerous growths, it might be worth all of the pain.

No forgiveness without confession

No, I think the greatest tragedy to be found in this wretched tale of sin and corruption may be the personal tragedy of Jim Bakker. To borrow from T.S. Elliot's aptly titled *The Hollow Men*, the saga of Jim Bakker ends not with a bang, but with a whimper.

The whimper, of course, is Jim's. He's developed whimpering to a high art form, and can't really be expected to stop now just because he's getting slapped in the face with a little reality. You've heard from Jim that this is Jessica Hahn's fault, that it's Jerry Falwell's fault, that it's his denomination's fault, that it's the government's fault. It would seem, in fact, that the fiasco over which Bakker presided at PTL was everyone's fault but his own.

Somehow, despite the warnings, rebukes, and condemnation he's received from his followers, his leaders, the government and the media, Jim Bakker has been unable to come to grips with the fact that he might just possibly be responsible for the fix that he's in. Faced with overwhelming evidence of his guilt, Bakker still proclaims his innocence. Unlike top PTL aide Richard Dortch who said "the reason I pled guilty is because I am guilty," Bakker seems to lack the spiritual depth needed to even entertain the notion that he might have done something wrong.

Christians serve a God who is "not willing that any should perish" — not even Jim Bakker. That's why God sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross. But before we can accept God's offer of the grace on which our salvation is based, we must come to a point in our lives where we realize that we are guilty, that our own righteousness is like filthy rags, that our only hope is Christ. Bakker doesn't seem to be at that point, and may never be. That's a tragedy.

Doing time might be a good experience for Jim Bakker. Maybe Prison Fellowship can reach him with the gospel.

Doug Trouten is the director of Evangelical Press (EP) News Service.

More evidence found for existence of 'Eve'

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (EP) — New genetic evidence has lent strength to the theory that all people alive today are descended from a single woman. Creationists believe that all people are descendants of Adam and Eve, as indicated in Genesis. But this new evidence comes not from a creationist organization, but from molecular biologist Allan C. Wilson, of the University of California, Berkeley.

Wilson's studies have led him to believe that humankind descended from a single African woman, dubbed "Eve," who lived 140,000 years ago. He believes descendants of Eve migrated north out of Africa 75,000 years ago and settled southern Europe 35,000 years ago.

Wilson formed his theory after studying DNA in mitochondria. Mitochondria has only 37 genes, making it easier to study than the cell's nucleus, which has an estimated 100,000 genes. Genes in mitochondria are also passed only from mothers, making possible a study of maternal lineage.

By comparing every possible pairing among 147 people tested for the study, Wilson determined that all modern people are descended from a woman who lived in Southern Africa 140,000 years ago. They speculate that other women may have been alive at the time, and suggest that the lineages descended from other women may have eventually died out.

Old wound opens in Indonesia

DILI, Indonesia (EP) — As Pope John Paul II called for reconciliation between government forces and native East Timorese whose land was annexed by Indonesia years ago, a fight broke out within yards of the pontiff with youths throwing chairs at policemen. The Pope, who spoke October 12 on a barren plain that was once a "killing field" for government troops, urged the Indonesian government to respect human rights in East Timor, where he said "many innocent people have died."

The predominantly Catholic area was taken over in 1974 by Indonesia, a largely Moslem nation. It is estimated that out of a population of about 650,000, some 200,000 East Timorese were killed. As the Pope spoke, about 20 youths chanting "Viva Il Papa," tried to force their way to the altar. They unfurled a banner calling for East Timor's independence. Police with riot sticks attacked them, and "dozens of other youths joined the brawl," said observers. No arrests were reported. The Pope was not in jeopardy during the outbreak, which lasted about 15 minutes.

Soviet Union hosts Christian music fest

TALLINN, Estonia, USSR (EP) — After nearly 70 years of persecuting the church, the Soviet Union is loosening its oppression, reports Word recording artist Scott Wesley Brown. Brown participated in a landmark Christian music festival in Tallinn, in the Soviet Union, Aug. 11-13. On their way to the concert, Brown and other members of the I CARE Ministries team provided badly needed musical instruments for Christian musicians and churches in Latvia, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Estonia and Russia. I CARE Ministries was founded by Brown in 1983 as an evangelistic effort to reach people in communist and third world countries through Christian music ministry.

Brown, who has made regular missions trips to the Soviet Union for a number of years, says the Tallinn gathering was a miracle. "When I first performed in Tallinn seven years ago, Christian concerts were illegal," he recalled. "But choir rehearsals were approved, so I 'just happened to show up' in the choir room to sing a few songs. Kids from other churches had to sneak into the church building, which is across the street from KGB headquarters. The church windows were open, and I was told that afterward the KGB wanted to know what my songs were all about!"

Brown says, "This year, thanks to *glasnost* and *perestroika*, the church was able to advertise the event to the public." Tickets were sold, and Estonia television covered the music festival. More than 15,000 Soviets attended the performances, which stretched over three days. Brown says "more than 2,000 decisions for Christ were made." The city has extended an invitation for a concert next year.

Brown was excited by opportunities to minister openly. "The public decisions for Christ were simply incredible. After laying the foundation for so many years in secret, this was like seeing the house get built."

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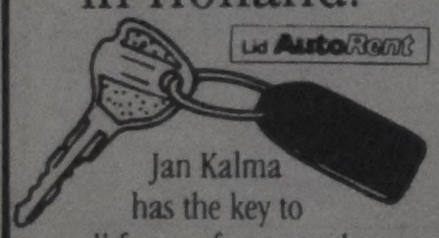

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SAYBROOK, Connecticut (EP) — For the first time since the 16th century, the New Testament as translated by William Tyndale will be available to the public. Tyndale was burned at the stake in 1536 by papal authorities on charges of heresy because of his efforts to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek. Copies that survived the Roman Catholic ban formed the basis for much of the King James Version of the Bible, translated in 1611. Tyndale-inspired translated phrases include "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak," and "the salt of the earth." The reproduction has been edited only to update antiquated spellings, and will be released by Yale University Press on November 15.

Paper maker turns over new leaf

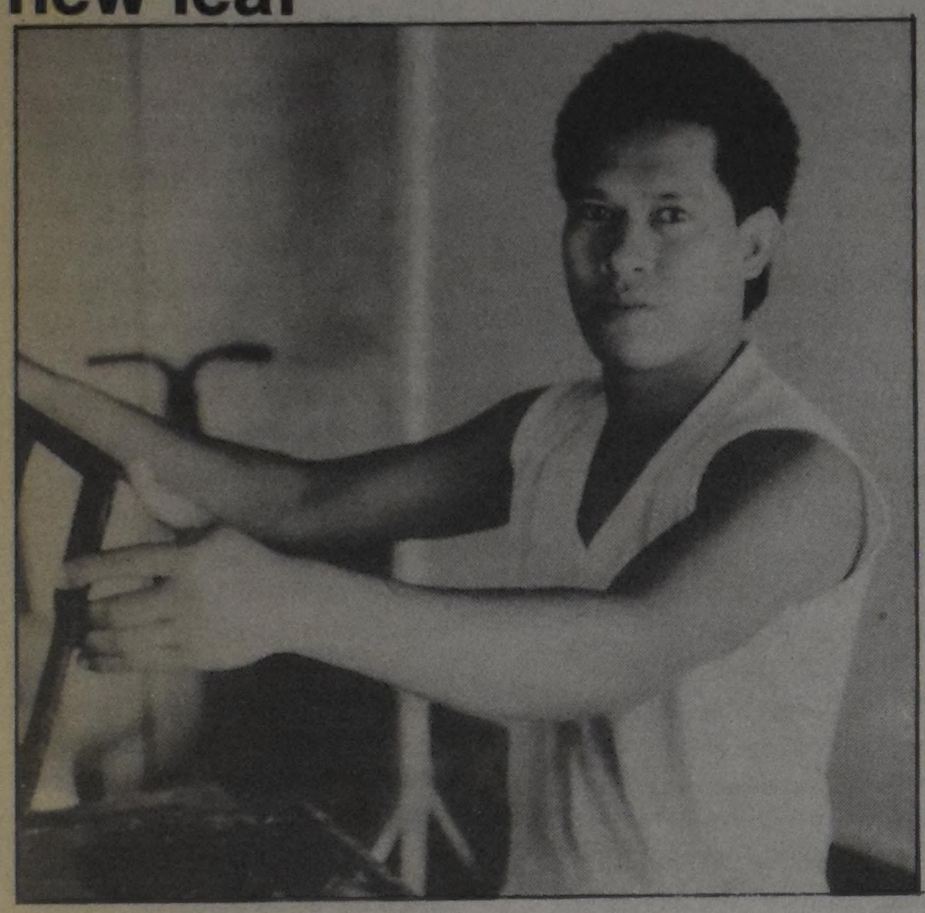

Photo: courtesy CRWM

Bernard Langurian has given up drugs and is now making paper as a way to pay for his seminary studies.

William Vander Hoven

In the wild grasses along the roads on Panay, one of the islands in the Philippines, Bernard Langurian sees paper. These abaca and magay plants look like weeds to most people, but Bernard is always on the look out for the kind of fibers that make good paper.

At his home, Bernard will chop and pound these weeds for hours before cooking the fibers and placing the mess in a large vat. A craftsman and an artist, Bernard has perfected his technique of dipping his paper mold into the pulp to get an even layer on a screen. After shaking off excess water, he places the soaking wet pieces of paper between felt and into a press to squeeze out the right amount of moisture — too dry and the paper will stick to the felt; too wet and it will curl as it dries. Finally, Bernard smooths out his creation-like wallpaper and waits til morning when he will have a uniquely textured yet usable piece of paper, and a thing of beauty.

There is a beauty in this story as well, however. Because in the hands of God, the Master Craftsman, Bernard has been carefully molded and formed from what may have been seen as ordinary into a person of beauty.

Bernard wasn't always very attractive. When this smart young man was in college he discovered that he could literally buy his grades instead of attending classes. That also meant he had more time for the drugs which he had learned to enjoy. Money was no problem because of his highly profitable business of dealing and pushing drugs. Looking at Bernard on the side of the road in Panay in those days, most people would not have seen a Christian. But God did, because God, like Bernard, is always looking for material that can be transformed from apparently nothing into something functionally beautiful.

For Bernard, the transformation came when God caught him between drug stupors. He was sober enough to realize the shambles of his life and his hopelessness. In that moment of clarity his world came crashing down. God had begun the beating process. With a friend, Bernard attended a missionary Bible study, and in time, he committed his life to Christ.

God has continued the pounding and the crushing, the molding and the shaping, until today you would hardly recognize Bernard from what he once was. He has a new set of values, a new sense of what's fun, and a new purpose for living.

When asked how God has been shaping him, Bernard talks about the dependency upon God that he is learning when he wonders if there will be food for dinner, or when he feels estranged from his family which doesn't understand him anymore. He talks about the servant heart God is creating in him. And people can see the gentleness of a servant in his attitude and his eyes.

In four short years Bernard has changed from a wheeling, dealing, drug pusher into a leader in the church. God has used him as an evangelist among his fellow Filipinos in the Miagao Christian Reformed Church for the past year. Bernard has led with enthusiasm and skill to help build that church, and he plans to attend seminary this year. Bernard will pay for his studies by making and selling paper.

To see and touch Bernard's paper is to know its beauty and quality. Meeting Bernard himself is an experience in seeing and feeling the beauty and quality that God is crafting in him.

William Vander Hoven is a missionary in the Philippines working with Christian Reformed World Missions.

Pastoral letter

Leonard Schalkwyk

Bible held hostage

You may have heard about Bible smuggling, but now I have discovered a case in which I saw the Bible held hostage. It all started out so innocently, but before I knew it ....

However, let me start at the beginning and tell it all in logical order. If I aim at anything in this column it is writing that is scientifically responsible.

I just read, in one sitting, a scientific book of close to 200 pages. It is called, "Science Held Hostage," written by Howard J. Van Till, Clarence Menninga and Davis A. Young. Even though it is scientific, it reads like a novel and one can read it in no time flat.

Actually, the book deals with evolution. It is heart-warming to see how atheistic natural evolution is rejected firmly. Natural evolutionists who do not allow for a supernatural cause are shown out the door. Brilliant critiques deal with men like Isaac Asimov, Douglas Futuyma, P.W. Atkins and Carl Sagan. The writers of this book state unequivocally that science is held hostage by such people who take their pre-conceived philosophy and bind science by a seven-fold cord. Because certain scientists teach evolution, is it therefore scientific to rule out a Higher Power? Or moral rules? Certainly not! I agree with the authors of this book in their critique.

But then these same authors turn around and look at the Bible! And they state in a series of chapters that "naturalism" should not hold science hostage but "creationism" should not do so either!

Here we are stepping on slippery ice. What if that same God who made all things tells us how he made it? If evolution disagrees about the how, who should have the last word? Who has to give in where? That is always the question in hostage-taking. How can we solve the deadlock? How far can the bargaining go?

No solution?

Let there be no misunderstanding. The writers of the book have honourable intentions. The back page of the book says that it is meant to solve the current impasse in the creation-evolution debate. However, the difficulty is this for the arbitrator between these two parties: that God says that he created and how he created. This does not click with the theory of science called evolution. What to do?

The writers suggest that we make God speak differently. Let us come halfway and show our goodwill to evolution. Call it "primeval history" or "packaging," but do not take Genesis 1-11 literally. (See for a more detailed description pp. 75-85 of Howard Van Till's "The Fourth Day.")

But if we give evolution a hand, it will soon take the whole arm. What is worse, in this way we allow science to take the Bible hostage!

Mainline denominations have allowed evolution to do so in the previous century. The results were disastrous. The Bible and the congregations crumbled.

"Theistic evolution" did not solve the impasse. For theistic evolution *is* rationalism and *does* dismantle the Bible. "Theistic evolution" is a contradiction in terms, it is a hybrid, a mixture of iron and clay. It is abnormal, just like "Christian Marxism" is a term which combines two mutually exclusive things.

God's word is infallible. Science is fallible. Just as we do not allow natural science to rob us of God, we should not allow theistic evolution to rob us of the Word of God.

To bargain is not the solution in the current impasse of the creation/evolution debate. It did not work in the past, it will not work now. It will only destroy.

The Reformer Martin Luther would say, "The Word: let it stand." The Apostle Paul would say, "Bring every thought under the obedience to Christ."

Leonard Schalkwyk is pastor of Springdale, Ont., Christian Reformed Church.

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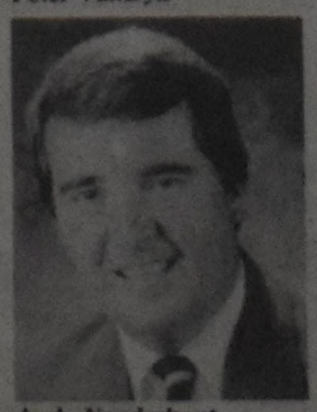

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The Deacons are coming — again

Paul De Groot

The Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." (Acts 6:3, 4)

The seven men chosen to distribute food to the widows and orphans of the early Christian church were the first "deacons."

One, Stephen, became the first martyr when he was stoned to death by opponents of the young Christian movement.

The origins of the word *deacon* are obscure, but the people who bore the title had a clear role in the church. They collected donations, distributed charity, and visited the sick and needy in a culture which had no unemployment insurance, pensions or health care.

As the church became a large institution, that role changed dramatically. Deacons evolved into assistants to the bishop at worship services, and eventually into a junior priesthood. In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches the "diaconate" is often a transitional role. Seminary graduates are made deacons and then, after a year or so, ordained as priests.

Some Protestant churches use deacons in ways roughly similar to their original position. Reformed churches often put deacons in charge of church finances and of providing financial aid to needy church members. But even there the job has often been seen as a testing ground for those who will be given more responsibility later.

Higher profile

Today, the diaconate is undergoing a renaissance. The Second Vatican Council re-established "permanent deacons" in the Roman Catholic Church. Permanent deacons are usually married and do not intend to become priests.

A report in June to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada called on Anglicans to "breath life into an ancient order," and fill the "deacon-shaped hole in the church."

As described by the Anglican report, deacons would be "an order of women and men called to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world," and to be "icons" of the hope and service which Christians offer the needy.

Lutherans have had an order of deaconesses since 1836, and at their convention this year, Canadian Lutherans invited a representative of an American order of deaconesses to speak.

This fall St. Stephen's College in Edmonton has begun a special program to train "diaconal ministers" in the United Church.

Deacons of the Christian Reformed Church have had a Northern Alberta Diaconal Conference for several decades, where deacons would meet to discuss common concerns. Four years ago, in an effort to improve communication between churches and provide better training for deacons, the conference appointed its first full-time director.

A servant role

Ormond Plater of Louisiana, editor of a magazine for deacons in the Episcopal Church in the United States, divides modern deacons into two categories.

In the first, more traditional role, deacons have a quasi-clerical function, performing marriages and baptisms, reading scripture during worship services, preaching and assisting at communion services.

The second, newer role, defines the deacon as a helper not to the church, but to the poor, depressed or needy. This kind of deacon is involved in social services, counselling, or even political activism.

"The older type is vanishing," Plater said in a telephone interview. The Episcopal Church has more than 1,000 deacons, 90 per cent of whom Plater describes as "the new type of servant deacon."

The more traditional type of deacon persists most evidently in the Roman Catholic Church, where deacons are often seen as substitutes for increasingly scarce priests.

The duties of the permanent deacon, as outlined by the Second Vatican Council (1963-65), have little to do with widows and orphans. Instead, the deacon is to administer baptism, serve communion elements at mass, perform marriages, give communion to the dying, read scripture at worship services, preside at prayers, and officiate at funeral and burial services.

Lay versus cleric

At a time when traditional church hierarchies are under fire from better educated and increasingly independent church members, the restoration of the diaconate is controversial.

Is the deacon a minor priest, or a super-layperson?

The laity (literally "the people") feel threatened by the notion of more clerics, or believe that deacons are a poor substitute for "real" priests. Priests feel threatened by deacons who assume many priestly functions.

The greatest fear, on both sides, is that ordaining people as deacons will detract from a powerful new thrust in the Christian church: the idea that every Christian is called to be a minister, a servant to society, part of "the priesthood of all believers."

Edmonton's Roman Catholic archbishop, Rev. Joseph MacNeil, believes the ordination of permanent deacons will send the wrong signals to both lay people and clergy.

The shortage of priests should be solved by the ordination of more priests, rather than the ordination of deacons; and greater involvement of laity in the church and society should result from greater commitment to their faith, rather than ordination as deacons, MacNeil believes.

The diaconate should be seen "in a more biblical sense, of being of service to the total church, in a way that will not interfere with the service that can be performed by lay people."

A model for lay people

MacNeil's concern about deacons is widely shared.

For example, an Anglican report recommending restoration of the diaconate was "recommended for further study" rather than adopted by the general synod in June out of concern that it could muddy the relationship between clergy and laity.

But others cite the experience of churches which have used deacons creatively as proof that lay involvement does not suffer.

Hal Graham is a permanent Roman Catholic deacon in Winnipeg. Married and the administrator of a Jesuit-run school, he also leads Morning Prayer (Matins) at the school and is involved in social justice issues, such as government funding for independent schools.

His ordination as a deacon serves both others in the church and himself, he said in a telephone interview.

"The commitment I have as a deacon is more formal than the one I had as a lay person. I perceive it that way and others perceive it that way."

Rather than detracting from lay involvement, says Graham, his ordination has probably helped more laypeople to assume their responsibilities in both church and society.

"I'm reluctant to replace laypeople [in liturgical functions]. I feel more satisfaction in training people and teaching people to the point that they can do it for themselves."

Betty Marlin, co-ordinator for the new United Church diaconal training program, says, "My experience is that diaconal ministry increases lay involvement by lay people. It engages people and involves them, inspires them."

Their own role

To distinguish clearly between deacons and priests, the Anglican report recommended that the church abandon the "transitional deacon" — the priest-in-waiting — and ordain deacons separately from candidates for the priesthood.

Sister Rosemary Anne of Edmonton, an Anglican sister who is also a priest, helped draft the Anglican report and says a restored diaconate "should be an order in its own right, with its own training and own work."

In spite of any confusion, interest in diaconal ministry is high, says Marlin.

United churches often ask for someone to do what a diaconal minister does, but they don't know where to find them. And many church members feel they could be more involved in the church but hold back for lack of training.

"Many people, when they heard about this program, said 'that sounds exactly like what I was looking for. I just didn't know it existed.'"

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New United Church document on biblical authority

Paul De Groot

EDMONTON — The Bible is an authoritative witness to Jesus, inspired by God, and not a literal, word-for-word revelation, says a new study document by the United Church.

But a representative for a powerful lobby group within the church says the document misrepresents the biblical tradition of the Protestant Reformation and contributes little to current debates in the United Church.

The long-awaited study document says "the issue is not *whether* the Scripture has authority for us. It has. The issue is that we differ in *how* we understand the Bible to have authority for us and in *how* we interpret the Bible. Given the church, society and culture in which we live, there is uncertainty as to how Scripture can be a sure and certain guide on a variety of matters."

The document, titled "The Authority and Interpretation of Scripture," was produced in response to the deep division in the church over the ordination of homosexuals.

Clearly intended for discussion purposes — it contains a six-page reaction form as well as lesson plans for group discussion — the document could touch off another round of fighting within the United Church.

The real issue

Many in the United Church, such as former moderator Rev. Robert Smith, believed that argument was not over homosexuals or homosexuality so much as over the way Christians should understand the Bible.

Some used the Bible to condemn homosexuality and the ordination of homosexuals, while others quoted different passages from the Bible to defend them.

The Community of Concern, a group within the United Church which opposes the ordination of homosexuals, decided last spring to establish its own committee to study the authority of the Bible. The community has as members about 1,000 of the church's approximately 4,000 ministers.

The new study document notes that the United Church has never accepted the "dictation" theory of biblical inspiration: that each word was written by a human hand, but dictated by God.

The document accepts modern "historical-critical" principles for studying the Bible. This approach, developed in the 19th century, treats the biblical manuscript not as a unique, faultless book which Christians can only accept as the Word of God, but as an ancient text whose dates, authorship, cultural context and literary forms are the key to its interpretation.

The document says the Bible has authority because it reveals God and describes the life, work and sayings of Jesus.

It quotes theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, as saying "its words and statements are not themselves true and eternal and holy, but only insofar as they bear witness to Christ."

Sola scriptura meant best authority

Other points made in the document:

• Major leaders in the Protestant Reformation did not read the Bible as though every word were literally true. The Reformation doctrine of *sola scriptura* meant that the Bible was the best, but not the only authority on God and faith.

• None of the original texts survive, and the copies that do exist do not always agree. Some translations of the Bible contain texts which modern scholars agree were inserted long after the original text was written.

• The New Testament was shaped over a period of centuries, beginning at least a generation after the death of Jesus. The early church had no single set of scriptures, but in some cases excluded books now regarded as scriptural today, and included other books no longer regarded as scripture.

• The writings in the Bible, particularly in the New Testament, were slanted to reflect the main concerns of the writers, and the audience for which they were intended.

• The Bible can be used with integrity to support either side of some issues, such as capital punishment. In other cases — such as the Bible's acceptance of slavery — Christians have departed from the beliefs held by those who wrote the Bible.

Rev. Gordon Ross, executive director of the Community of Concern, said the document misrepresents the position of the Reformers, and "doesn't engage appropriately with the person and work of Jesus Christ as the primary theme of scripture. It's badly out of focus."

Previous church documents, such as "Sexual Orientation, Lifestyle and Ministry," written in 1988, clearly challenged traditional approaches to interpreting the Bible. The new document "backs away" from questions raised in that earlier document, which prompted about 1,500 protests from United Church congregations.

Ross said the Community of Concern will shortly be distributing its own critique of the new study document.

Send your questions to Peter and Marja c/o Calvinist Contact. Confidentiality is assured.

Edmonton students educated via manual work

Photo: courtesy Louisa F. Bruinsma

Meghan Graham, Sandra Evans and Joylene Guillaume help spruce up Camp Rehoboth, a refuge for the mentally handicapped.

Louisa F. Bruinsma

The sound of steady hammering. The regular back and forth swish of a paintbrush. The thud of an axe. The hypnotic whine of a rug shampooer.

These are not the sounds one generally associates with the classroom. Yet for 59 Grade 11 students from Edmonton Christian High School they were the unmistakeable sounds of learning.

Camp Rehoboth served as their classroom for three days. Situated near Stony Plain, it provides housing and programs for mentally handicapped people. The students spent three days working at the site in a variety of tasks.

Crews were set up for painting, clearing underbrush, transplanting trees, spring cleaning, and food preparation.

"The students realized the capabilities of the handicapped," said student Marina Brouwer. "Their work in the greenhouses and the workshops is excellent."

Wil Vandervelde worked alongside some of the Rehoboth residents in transplanting trees. "Before I went to Rehoboth I was always a bit nervous around the handicapped," he said. "After the experience I knew much better how to interact with them. I had fun with them and talked with them."

"Last Saturday I met a handicapped person in a jacuzzi. Before I would probably just have ignored him. Now it was easy to talk to him."

Brian Hofstede spent an entire day digging up raspberry bushes. When asked how this work project fitted into the philosophy of a Christian school, he said simply, "We're helping one another."

"I was amazed at how hard the students worked," said parent volunteer Sandra Visscher. "And they worked so well together."

Teacher Roy VandeKamp agreed. "They worked very hard, and got a lot done."

The significance of work projects of this sort lies in encouraging a focus on service in the broader community. In the previous year the students had spent a week doing maintenance work on a shelter for runaways. Through these very concrete acts students come to see beyond themselves. And in the process, all sorts of learning does indeed take place, learning that simply cannot be done in the confines of a classroom or from a textbook.

Louisa F. Bruinsma is director of development for the Edmonton Society for Christian Education. Reprinted with permission from Sunshine News, Edmonton.

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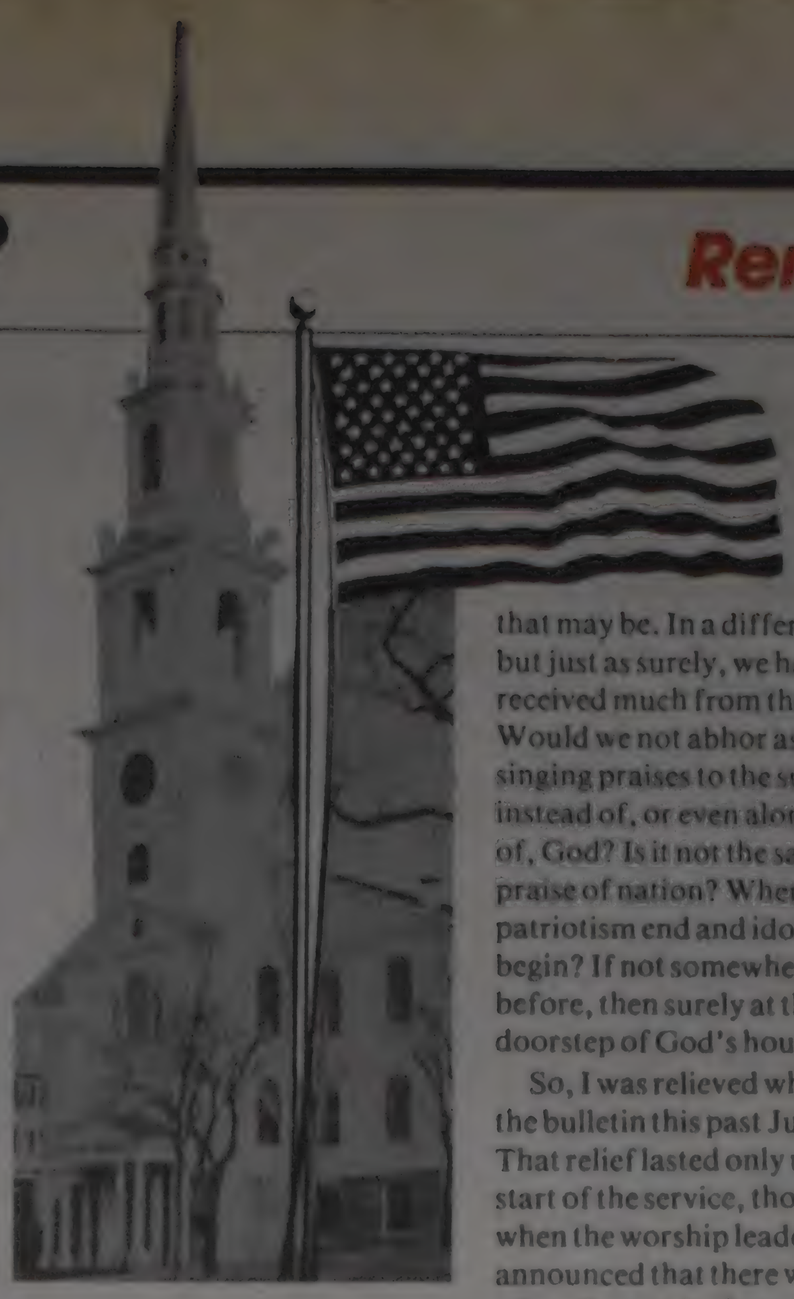
For God and country?

Remembrance Day



James R. Payton, Jr.

This year in the last week of June, as I've done the last few years, I packed up my family after the kids finished school here in Ontario and headed for the American Midwest to visit Grandma and assorted relatives. Living so far away, we don't get to do that very often. It makes for a terrific way to start the summer — until we go to church.

Don't get me wrong. We don't want to take a vacation from God. In fact, that's precisely our problem. Taking our vacation this way plops us in church on the Sunday nearest July 4. We have all come to know what that means — a substantial dose of American patriotism in song, prayer, and sermon. It has happened every time. And *this* year, with the Supreme Court's decision about burning the U.S. flag still singeing the American newspapers, would the scenario be likely to change?

So as we settled into the pew on July 2, I opened the bulletin and scanned the hymns and sermon title, hoping against hope that this time would, nevertheless, be different. When I saw the titles, I breathed a sigh of relief.

Another citizenship

I have nothing against patriotic feeling. Many Canadians often lament the low flame of patriotic fervor north of the 49th Parallel, speaking wistfully of what Americans exude so abundantly. I tend, on the whole, to agree. Nor am I some nationalistic Canadian zealot, deluding myself (as many here have done) that bashing practices and attitudes American will somehow conjure up that elusive "distinctive Canadian identity" which functions among us as cultural myth but escapes observation and viable definition. It's not with any such attitude that I approach those "Independence Sunday" services.

As a matter of fact, though I am a "permanent resident" (to use the official jargon) of Canada, I am an American citizen. My difficulty on those Sundays is not just that living for an extended period of time in another country has forced me to view my native land's international policies, self-conception, and politics from another angle (although it has); if that were the source of my malaise, my uneasiness would be only a private idiosyncrasy, to be shared as a sort of secret handshake with that coterie of similarly displaced (and often embarrassed) fellow Americans.

My tension comes, rather, from another source, one that I share with a host of my fellow citizens, whether they live in the U.S. or elsewhere.

I recall someone long ago saying that, as a Christian, I have a more ultimate citizenship, one in another kingdom. When I go to church, I go to sing about that kingdom and the liberty found only within it — purchased and secured by blood, indeed, but the blood, not of many, but of one.

The sun has been good, too

You see, it's not just that I empathize with my wife, who is a Canadian citizen, in this anomalous worship situation. Indeed, as a child of God she comes to her Father's house but finds she must either sing falsehoods in his praise, or be silent. Why should American (or any other) patriotism obtrude between her and her God?

As a Christian who is an American, I, too, find this situation full of tension: dare I really, as "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" does, identify "the glory of the coming of the Lord" with the survival of the union through the Civil War? Is the unshakeable Kingdom where God's glory is manifest and for which we worship him (Heb. 12:28) the U.S.A.?

Can I really kid myself that, in the first stanza of "My Country 'tis of Thee," the "thee" in "of thee I sing" is God rather than America? How can any reflective Christian effuse love for his or her nation in the words of its second stanza: "My heart with rapture fills *like that above*"?

Unquestionably, all of us have received much from our homeland, whatever country that may be. In a different way, but just as surely, we have received much from the sun. Would we not abhor as idolatry singing praises to the sun instead of, or even alongside of, God? Is it not the same with praise of nation? Where does patriotism end and idolatry begin? If not somewhere before, then surely at the doorstep of God's house.

So, I was relieved when I saw the bulletin this past July 2. That relief lasted only until the start of the service, though, when the worship leader announced that there would be a few changes in the service because it was a *special* Sunday. Instead of the first two hymns (which I had noted fit well with the flow of the service, the scripture reading and the sermon topic), we would be singing — even a healthy sense of irony didn't prepare me for this — "My Country, 'tis of Thee" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

I sang only the phrases I could, in good conscience before God. I stood in stunned silence as the congregation sang, in the third stanza of the former, that, if human voice raised in praise of America were not enough, "let rocks their silence break." Does blasphemy become worship by clothing itself in red, white, and blue?

As we took our seats again, the service leader announced that he would be reading a different scripture passage than the one listed in the bulletin. As he read quickly through 11 Corinthians 3, I puzzled what that passage had to do with the rest of the service as announced in the bulletin or thus far conducted. It became painfully clear when his cadence slowed and he solemnly intoned, "And *where* the *Spirit of the Lord* is, THERE is LIBERTY!"

I was glad he wasn't doing the preaching. After that, with much grinding of liturgical gears, the service shifted back to the remainder of what had been announced in the bulletin.

We should pray for the pastor

Clumsily handled? Indeed. Extreme example? Perhaps. But a finely crafted golden calf is no less an idol than a poorly carved image in rotten wood. With what I've heard from a number of Canadian Christians over the last few years who have been in the U.S. on such a Sunday, Aaron and Jeroboam, Inc. and their cut-rate competitors have been doing land-office business.

Maybe next year we should delay our vacation.

Perhaps I should take heart, though. Maybe the bulletin reflected the pastor's attempt to join Elijah's 7,000, but his courage failed him when the worship leader expressed dismay. Or maybe the pastor simply forgot what Sunday it was and focused on God alone. Either way, he took a step in the right direction. We should pray for him.

We probably won't delay our vacation next year. Maybe we'll give it one more try. Maybe it will be different. I hope so — for our sake, for the church's sake, for America's sake, and for God's sake.

Dr. James Payton is assistant professor of history at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

The gift of freedom remembered

Photo: World Book Encyclopedia

"Their heads were shaven bald. Winter and summer, the prisoners were rudely awakened at dawn and sent off to work under heavy guard at nearby factories and fields."

Carl D. Tuyl

He was born just before the great recession choked the Western countries' economic progress to a gasping standstill. He grew up on a small farm on a steady diet of potatoes and vegetables, with a minuscule piece of meat on Sundays. Prayer and Bible reading accompanied every modest meal. Through the dark years of living far below the poverty line his parents stubbornly refused to leave the farm. They would not give up their independence, and maintained it at the cost of severe deprivation, ever struggling to scrape a living off their land. He inherited from his parents that passionate insistence on freedom and independence.

When German troops occupied the country in the spring of 1940, he experienced the loss of national freedom in an intensely personal way. He organized a resistance group of some like-minded men and they began to plot ways to sabotage the German war machine.

Their first action was a spectacular one. A freight train filled with goods destined for Germany was side-tracked, parked overnight in a nearby railroad yard. Only a few soldiers guarded the train. Under cover of darkness the group managed to set all the cars on fire. The flames illuminated the dark sky for miles around and it took weeks before the tracks were cleared.

Their activities expanded into a great variety of resistance work. They manufactured false identification documentation, printed and distributed resistance newspapers, supplied hiding places for people sought by the Gestapo, organized places of refuge for Jews and established links with other resistance cells.

The Gestapo, who had become aware of their existence, managed to infiltrate the group. An attractive young girl, recruited by the men as a courier, was a double agent. As a result of her betrayal, all the members of the cell were arrested in one fell swoop. He was led away between two soldiers and it was the last his family would see or hear of him for many years.

★ ★ ★ ★

Features

After indescribable torture in which, with superhuman effort, he refused to release any information, he was transported to a concentration camp. The camp housed more than 2,000 prisoners, all living at the edge of starvation. They were clothed in blue-striped uniforms, a number sewn on each chest. Their heads were shaven bald. Winter and summer, the prisoners were rudely awakened at dawn and sent off to work under heavy guard at nearby factories and fields.

Guards, mostly S.S. men, mercilessly and repeatedly hit those who worked too slowly, and often beat the exhausted prisoners to death. At night the bodies of the dead would be carried into the camp on wheelbarrows for the evening count of the camp population.

The cruelty of the guards knew no bounds. Prisoners were beaten, starved, some thrown alive into the huge camp's septic tank to drown, hung by the beard — Jewish prisoners were forbidden to shave — forced to stand on their feet for days, locked in totally dark dungeons and wrapped in rolls of barbed wire. Death was a daily visitor, seen and experienced by many as a release from unbearable suffering.

It was only a fierce will to live that kept him from dying. Death would come to those who lost that will to live. There was, he knew, somewhere deep within the human psyche, a power that can end life or continue it. Many of his fellow prisoners chose death by calling on that mysterious power. He refused, and with the angry and defiant passion that had bound his parents to their land, he clung to life. Looking at his body, on which the skeleton seemed to be covered by skin only, he knew that he could call on death to free him; but, with all the determination that a human being can have, he wanted to live.

The years went by, and it was as if his body had gotten used to its deprived state. The knowledge of survival became a certainty within him, even when people around him died daily in multiples of hundreds.

* * * *

One morning, after many years, the number of guards all of a sudden seemed to have increased greatly. German soldiers were everywhere. He sensed a nervous excitement in their cursing and shouting. The prisoners were marched out of the camp and launched on what became known as the March of Death.

The long column moved onto a mud-covered country road. Armed soldiers prodded them on, hitting indiscriminately with the butts of their rifles into the rows of prisoners. It was bitterly cold and the thin uniforms offered no protection against the biting wind. Some of the prisoners walked on wooden clogs, but many had no more than a few rags wound around their feet.

After a few hours, the first of the blue-striped men began to fall, unable to continue. They fell into the mud, and the long rows of prisoners passed them by in silence. They were shot by the soldiers at the rear of the column. Their bodies remained, sprawled on the ground as if they were no more than discarded wrappings.

He did not know how long this procession of death lasted. There were nights and days, that much he knew. As darkness fell, the prisoners huddled in great heaps of humanity to draw some warmth from each other's exhausted bodies. They received no food, and they scooped puddled rainwater into their mouths to quench their thirst.

Ever more bodies began to be left behind as the rifleshots rang out with cursed regularity. With strength from some unknown reservoir, he supported for a while (as best he could) a man on wobbly legs who struggled to keep walking beside him. Then the man collapsed against him and fell to the ground. He heard the shot that followed; the sound of it echoed in his mind till the day he died.

Suddenly among the groaning of the prisoners and the shouted curses of the guards he became aware of another sound. A sort of dull, rumbling noise at the horizon behind them. He dared not even look backward, for a German soldier walked right beside him. But he noticed that the soldier became agitated. "Schneller, du Schweinehund!" ("Faster, you pig!") the soldier shouted as he hit a prisoner in a row ahead of him.

The column entered a stretch of road that wound through a forest. The trees took some of the sharpness out of the wind, as if they wanted to comfort this column of suffering humanity. Suddenly, a new sound mixed itself with the low murmur of misery. Sharp, quick repetitions of shots. Machine guns, he thought. And he understood the situation with sudden insight. The Germans were on the run. Retreating! Somewhere behind him was freedom.

Unexpectedly, with much cursing and heavy hitting, the soldiers made the prisoners sit under the trees at the side of the road. The captives fell down, immediately seeking a little warmth in each other's closeness.

The Germans vanished into the woods. None of the prisoners moved, but excitement bounded through the ranks as they began to pass word along to each other: "The Germans are gone!"

* * * *

Around the bend in the road a few hundred metres back, men with blackened faces in mud-covered uniforms, rifles at their hips, slowly approached the prisoners. For what seemed like a long time, the prisoners and the soldiers watched each other in awe-filled silence; then the blue-striped survivors began to shout and weep simultaneously.

A soldier handed him a canteen and he drank, not knowing what it was he swallowed. He just drank, and then fell into an empty nothingness. A few hours later after a long column of ambulances had arrived, he was placed by caring arms onto a stretcher. He woke up with no idea how much time had passed or where he was.

A soldier with a red cross on his arm tried to feed him some porridge. He swallowed eagerly, but his body had forgotten the process of digestion and he vomited with painful heavings. The soldier helped him drink something; then he fell back again into that unconscious state between sleep and coma.

He came home on a sunny day in the late spring of 1945. Canadian corpsmen carried him into the house on a stretcher and a uniformed doctor gave instructions. He was to eat often, but very small portions of liquid food. His mother, who had clung to the hope of his survival all through the dark years of the occupation, embraced him and covered him with her tears. His cheekbones jutted out of his emaciated face, but his eyes, hollow in their sockets, sparkled with life.

He could only speak a few words in succession, resting between short sentences, gasping for breath. His sleep was like his speaking — short periods of rest interrupted by fearful nightmares in which the suffering of countless victims disturbed his peace.

He never fully recovered, although he lived for some years after his return. His mind was never quite at rest, for fear had permanently settled into his being. But he died a free man, a gift that only those who shared his experiences can wholly appreciate. We who are used to living in freedom have no idea of the magnitude and splendour of that privilege.

He always remembered that his freedom was bought at a great price. For the rest of his short life he would, with all the eloquence and emotion of his forever-scarred being, express his gratitude to those who liberated him. As he remembered, he would think with sadness about those whose lives were cut short; but with joy and gratitude he accepted their gift: freedom!

Carl Tuyl is a survivor of a Nazi concentration camp of World War II. He is pastor of the First Christian Reformed Church, Kingston, Ont.

Photo: World War 1939-1945/by Peter Young

Belsen Concentration Camp. Germans forced to remove bodies at rifle point.

The blood-red poppy

Photo: The World Book Encyclopedia

Shirley poppy, illustrated by Robert Hynes

William R. Rang

From November 1 until Remembrance Day is over we wear our poppies. We do it to remember Canada's war dead. But why was the poppy chosen?

The poppy is an international symbol for those who died in war, and that symbol had international origins.

A French writer first made the connection between the poppy and battlefield deaths during the Napoleonic Wars of the early 19th century, observing that the fields were barren before the battles and exploded with those blood-red flowers after the fighting ended.

Prior to the first World War, few poppies grew in Flanders. As a result of the heavy bombardments of that war, the chalk soil became rich in lime from the rubble, allowing the *popaver rhoeas* to thrive. Following the war, the soil began to absorb the lime and the poppy began to disappear.

Although the poppy became a known symbol in Canada because of the poem "In Flanders' Fields" by Lt. Col. John McCrae, it was a simple woman in New York by the name of Moina Michael who started to wear a poppy in memory of the millions who died on the battlefields. And it was a French woman Madam Guerin, who was the first to wear hand-made poppies, desiring to raise money for destitute children in the war-torn parts of her country.

Poppies are worn to remember the dead, not to celebrate peace. The men in battle dress did not think of peace first. They realized that there had to be victory before there could be peace.

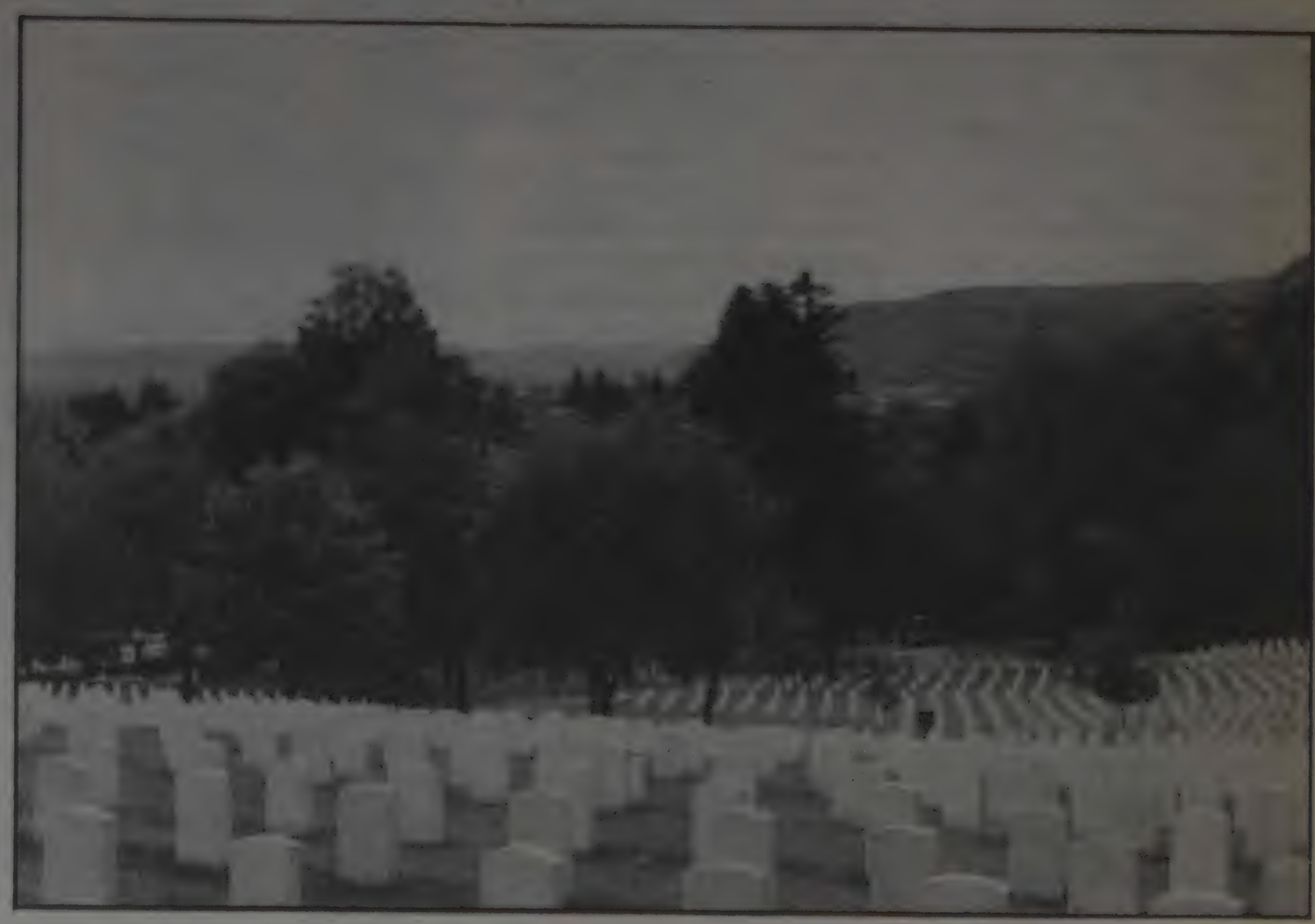


Photo: Marian Van Til

"Poppies are worn to remember the dead, not to celebrate peace."

The thought mechanism of Christians do not work the way they do for secular folks. When I pin a poppy on my jacket, I am once more reminded of something beyond Flanders Fields. I think of the victory of Christ and the peace with God that resulted from it. This puts all activities related to Remembrance Day in a different light.

Yet the same Lord who gave me peace with God also wants me to promote peace here on earth. The same Lord who gained victory first and knew that through his sacrifice he could work peace with God in our hearts was also the Lord who guided us through the events of history to end a war that took the lives of so many of our fellow citizens.

That knowledge helps me remember on Remembrance Day.

William R. Rang is principal of Dunnville (Ont.) Christian School.

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Date of this issue will be **December 1.** It will be mailed to our regular subscribers on **November 28.**

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Religion in the public schools (1)

The myth of a general Christianity will be shattered

Photo: courtesy Adrian Guldemond

Adrian Guldemond, executive director of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.

Adrian Guldemond

Religion has always been a controversial topic in the public schools of Ontario. After the next Court of Appeal decision, we can expect another hot debate in the province. If you thought that the abolition of the Lord's Prayer was radical, wait till the next instalment. Many people have misconceptions about religion in the good old days. Some think that before World War II everyone in Ontario was in favour of Christian education and that there were major areas of agreement among Christians and non-Christians. That is a myth.

Right from the 1840s on, religion has been a political hot potato. As early as 1843 the public school act allowed any parent to object to religious instruction (reading the Bible). Many, especially Catholics, did.

In 1927, after Catholics lost the now famous court cases for control of their own schools, the government of Ontario passed a cabinet regulation allowing pastors to teach their own flocks right after school was over, or during school hours. As a matter of record, there was considerable political pressure from churches to teach catechism at school.

The roaring '20s were not noted for their religious fervour. Many churches complained that their youth were not attending Sunday school or catechism classes, so they wanted the schools to support the church and help them out. Only Presbyterian pastors voiced some concerns about this being the improper role of the state.

It was not until the Second World War challenged the moral fibre of the nation that the government went into action and passed Regulation 30/44. The main provisions of the regulation were as follows: Compulsory devotional exercises, reading of scripture, *two half-hour religious instruction periods each week,* to be given by regular teachers; clergy could be designated by the board; parents, teachers, or boards could request an exemption, and the inspector should, each year, remind the board of its duties. Finally, the Ministry of Education prepared a course of religious studies to be followed by the schools.

In the decade of the booming and progressive '60s, these requirements were more and more ignored. The minister did nothing. Finally, in 1978 the ministry did the safe thing and gave the responsibility for the "religious classes" to the local boards. So some boards did, and some boards did not provide religious instruction in addition to the secular curriculum. In 1945, 63 boards had requested exemptions. Most were in rural, Catholic ridings.

Indoctrination

In 1944 there was no doubt in anyone's mind that public school religion courses were designed to indoctrinate students into Protestant Christianity. True, the government had expressly forbidden the teaching of sectarian and controversial issues. But the course outline focused on the general Protestant doctrines and the centrality of Jesus. Complaints from Jewish and Jehovah's Witness groups were ignored.

In the 1960s, the educational fashion was moral education, "values clarification" and personal growth. New courses were developed, such as world religions, "Man in Society," personal decision making and many more. All were based on the new consensus that morality could be taught more effectively without religious indoctrination. In fact, *inculcating* values was now regarded by all educators, including many Christians, as BAD.

Religious instruction was officially retained and taught in a few schools for three reasons. One, it was thought to have cultural value. It was helpful in instilling moral and civic values. Second, Canada was still thought to be a "Christian" nation. Third, one senior official once said, "there are a lot of pious old ladies out there in rural Ontario who can still get to the polls at election time." However, for all real educational purposes, religion was merely a useful superstition.

In the 1970s, Canadians suddenly discovered civil rights. This came from the realization that Canada now had a massive state bureaucracy. This was new to Canadians who still believed that they were a small rural society. It usually takes a while for reality to sink in, especially when it is unpleasant.

In education, Protestants in Ontario persist in believing that they have locally controlled schools, whereas in truth they have one of the most efficient, centralized bureaucratic monopolies in the Western world. The myth which allowed such centralization to occur was the deception, proposed by public school educators themselves, that there is such a thing as general Christianity (virtues like love, honesty and industry) and that only the schools can teach morality.

This convenient illusion hides the totally secular content of the *real* curriculum — the courses you get credits for — and allows the Christian churches to support public schools. The government uses the myth as a political ideal to show that a general moral consensus exists in Ontario, hence Ontario does not need separate or private schools.

Hot issue

Thus, in 1985 when the Canadian Civil Liberties Association decided to challenge the regulation which authorizes religious indoctrination during school time, many churches were alarmed. The liberal mainline churches were organized as the Ecumenical Study Commission. They favour moral education in the public schools.

The conservative evangelical churches had never gotten involved in that sort of thing before, but now, under the leadership of the social action committee of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, they have formed a Coalition for Religious Freedom. They want the regulation retained in order to avoid having Christianity completely banished from the public school system. If that were to happen, their rationale for support of the public system would require a major overhaul.

So it is easy to understand that the stakes are high for certain church groups. From the point of view of the government, nothing much would change in the schools if the regulation were declared unconstitutional. However, the ministry does not want to alienate another group of voters. Besides, having "religious instruction" in the public school is an excellent argument to "prove" that Christian schools are not necessary in Ontario. The public school can continue to claim to serve the needs of all people.

So although the court decision on the regulation will not change the power of the minister to control all aspects of education, there will be a public relations problem, because the myth will have been shattered.

(Next week: Conclusion of this two-part series)

Dr. Guldemond is executive director of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools. He lives in Ancaster, Ont.

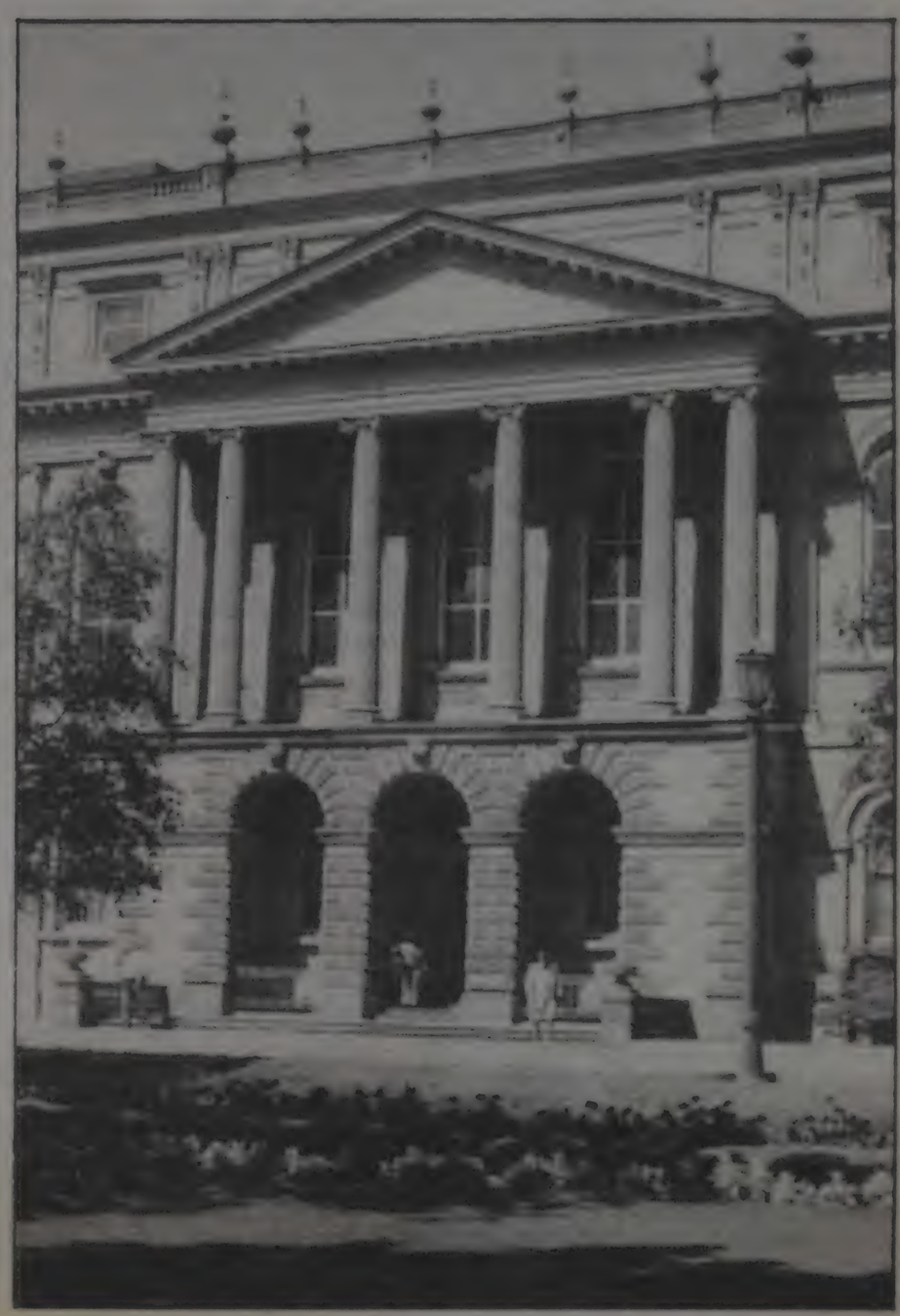

Photo: courtesy Adrian Guldemond

Osgood Hall, home of the University of Toronto's law school.

See pages 20-23 for Classified section

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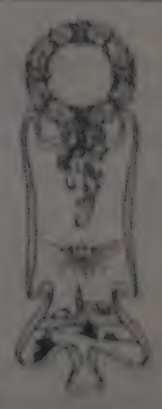

Just a reminder that the deadline for season's greetings to appear in the Dec. 1 Christmas issue is Wednesday, Nov. 22. Every year subscribers to Calvinist Contact use the special classified section to extend their season's greetings to family and friends. Kindly enclose payment of $20 with your ad and send it in today. Forget the fuss of Christmas cards and postage stamps; one ad does it all.

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News

Christian political party to awaken from its post-election sleep?

Bert Witvoet

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — There is no denying that a vigorous campaign without the desired fruits of parliamentary representation can take the starch out of you for a while. No wonder the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) of Canada has been resting for the past year behind the sign "Please do not disturb."

Ray Pennings wants to change that. He has let his name stand for secretary of the national board; and, since he is unopposed, will probably get the position by acclamation at the neat convention.

Ray was Ontario executive director of the CHP and was a candidate during the 1988 federal election in the Hamilton-Wentworth riding. He garnered the highest gross number of votes (4,112) of any CHP candidate.

At the moment he is membership director for the Reformed Christian Business and Professional Organization but will relinquish that position on December 15.

Pins hopes on convention

According to Pennings, it was a mistake to close down the Ontario CHP office in Burlington after the election. "We have become passive," he says. He wants the organization to return to the aggressiveness of the first two years — '86 to '88.

Pennings is confident that the pace will pick up considerably at the national CHP convention to be held November 7-10 in Edmonton.

Four things will happen there that may prove him right. The delegates will be voting on constitutional resolutions which call for a restructuring of the power now residing in the national board. The new proposals ask that the provincial presidents be elected from the provincial executive *by* that executive, instead of at national conventions. In addition, all policy proposals put forth by provincial executives *must* be considered by the national board if the proposal passes.

The policy resolutions ratified at the National Founding Convention of 1987 in Hamilton will be corrected, updated (it doesn't do anymore to have a policy demanding that the Soviets get out of Afghanistan) and added to in Edmonton.

There will be a leadership review at the convention, as required per constitution (the constitution of the party calls for a review at every convention). A majority of two-thirds is needed to affirm the leadership of National Leader Ed Vanwoudenberg. If there has to be a leadership change, this is the time to call for it, says Pennings, because the following convention will be too close to the next federal election to make a responsible change in leadership.

Finally, a new executive will be elected at the next convention, with three of the four positions seeing a race between two candidates.

Pennings hopes that after the convention there will be a definite move from volunteerism to professionalism, and that several provincial offices will be opened to give the party more visibility and life.

Labour union says two Eds are better than one

Robert VanderVennen

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — The Christian Labour Association of Canada has appointed Ed Grootenboer to succeed Ed Vanderkloet as its executive director, while retaining the services of Vanderkloet in a key position.

Grootenboer took over the position in July after serving CLAC in Chatham, Ont., since 1974. As field representative in Chatham he acquired a wide range of experience in all aspects of labour relations and union representation. For the past 10 years he has been in charge of the Chatham office, and for two years he has chaired CLAC's staff council.

Vanderkloet will continue to serve as editor of *The Guide*, monthly publication of CLAC with a circulation of 10,500, which he estimates to take about 40 per cent of his time. The rest of his time will be used to develop other CLAC publications and speak for public meetings. He may also represent CLAC at some arbitration and labour board hearings.

Vanderkloet joined the staff of CLAC 23 years ago as a field representative. Then in January, 1973, he succeeded Gerald Vandezande as executive director. When he started with CLAC there were only three field representatives, but today there are 19 serving full-time. Although Vanderkloet is in quite good health, he stepped down as executive director on doctor's advice after a serious illness in 1987.

Significant growth

CLAC has grown significantly in recent years, and Grootenboer expects it to continue to grow. This growth is happening at the same time that union membership in Canada is declining. At present, CLAC has 7,800 union members in B.C., Alberta and Ontario. Although started by Dutch immigrants, Vanderkloet estimates that fewer than 10 per cent of its employee members are now of Dutch background.

Membership growth has taken place especially in the construction and transportation industries in the West, and in the health care sector in Ontario. CLAC takes special satisfaction from the help it has given workers in nursing homes whose wages have traditionally been atrociously low — when they started organizing nursing homes in 1972, wages were around $1.80 an hour, with few benefits and little chance of workers standing up to employer exploitation.

CLAC emphasizes service to its locals, and likes to have its places of employment be not more than 100 miles from the office of a CLAC representative, so they can be readily available. CLAC has a lower ratio of union members to staff members than most unions. Growth of membership comes chiefly from places of employment previously unorganized, to which CLAC is invited by employees who have heard good reports about its services.

Movement as well as labour union

"The CLAC is a labour movement as well as a union," points out Grootenboer. Since its start in the early 1950s it has brought a conception of labour relations based on a Christian worldview that advocates constructive co-operation between labour and management working for common goals, rather than the Marxist ideology of class struggle.

"The law recognizes only an adversarial relation between workers and employers," says Vanderkloet. He hopes to start a series of articles in *The Guide* which, in a "basic, down-to-earth way" will make clear from a Christian vantage point what it means to be busy as a worker.

Today CLAC has some 2,300 non-employee members organized into about 50 General Worker Locals, people who support the CLAC and communally contribute $250,000 in union dues each year. CLAC is the only Christian labour union in Canada. "We have a voice in Canada way beyond our size," says Grootenboer.

Grootenboer says that his job as executive director is to facilitate and co-ordinate the work of the union and its local representatives, so they can best work in unity toward communal goals. He will also be active in the struggle to meet the annual budget, which at present stands at $1.6 million.

CLAC has a 10-member national board elected by a national convention which meets in alternate years. It is currently chaired by Sylvan Gerritsma of St. Catharines, Ont.

Photo: Robert VanderVennen

Ed Grootenboer (left) and Ed Vanderkloet enjoy working together in their new building in Mississauga.

With its continuing growth, the labour union has burst from its former building in northwest Toronto and has had a new building constructed in Mississauga, near highway 401 and the Toronto airport. Office staff consider it a beautiful but functional building, with room for growth.

Government promotes heritage language study

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — A Canadian Heritage Languages Institute is being founded by the federal government to improve the teaching of languages brought to Canada by immigrants.

According to Bill C-37 introduced in parliament recently, the institute will be located in Edmonton but will not be a place where people go to study languages. Instead, it will assist the development of study programs for various languages, help to develop standards of instruction, and generally try to improve the level of teaching.

In introducing the bill, Multiculturalism and Citizenship Minister Gerry Weiner said, "The need for this institute is stronger than ever because enrolment in heritage languages classes is greater than ever. Currently 129,000 students are enrolled across the country, studying 60 languages." Classes in heritage language study are run in schools after school hours.

Over its first five years the institute will receive a total of $6.5 million from the federal government, which includes a $4.0 million endowment fund to secure long-term financial stability. It will be structured as a charitable foundation which can receive donation support from private sources. It will be managed by a board of directors.

The bill defines a "heritage language" as "a language, other than one of the official languages of Canada, that contributes to the linguistic heritage of Canada, and includes any aboriginal language."

Order your Christmas gift subscription now!

The emerald sash (2)

Photo: Ed Vanderkloet
Lake Toba.

Ed Vanderkloet

After spending two days in Siantar I continue my journey through north Sumatra. The first brief stop is Prapat on the shores of Lake Toba. The area is like a fairytale, something straight out of Narnia. Surrounded by high mountains the view is breathtaking, a tourist's paradise. People in Medan urged me to spend a few days there but my schedule doesn't allow more than a couple of hours.

Triumph of the Gospel

We drive on into the mountains towards Tarutung, a town located on the edge of the Silindung valley. I know the place well for we had an army sub unit there which I visited regularly. It was there where the gospel of Jesus Christ made its triumphant entry into Batakland.

In 1834 two American missionaries, Munson and Lyman, were murdered and eaten by the pagan cannibals who populated the jungle-covered valleys. But in 1863, the same year Jacobus Nienhuys began his tobacco pioneering near Medan, a German missionary arrived in Tarutung, answering the call of his Lord. His name was Ludwig Nommensen and he spent the rest of his life (55 years) among the Bataks.

Today there are 2½ million Protestant Christian Bataks and the countryside from Siantar to Sidempuan, some 400 km., is dotted with neat, white churches of the HKBP (*Huria Kristen Batak Protestan* or Batak Protestant Christian Church). The Batak churches are flourishing like few churches ever do; they have established primary and secondary schools and even a full-fledged university named after Nommensen, with campuses in Medan and Siantar.

Death alley

The next and last stage of our journey for the day has bittersweet memories. Long ago we called it the *dodenrit* or "death alley." It's only 66 kilometres from Tarutung to Sibolga but the road has 1,300 S- and hairpin turns. In 1949 I travelled this road some 20 times, always in heavily armed truck convoys, and almost invariably we were at the receiving end of gunfire from our hidden enemies across the steep ravines. The convoys would answer with their own barrage of gunfire which reverberated through the mountains.

But most of the time the foe was invisible in the green hell that surrounded us. We were sitting ducks throughout the two-hour journey. It was always a nerve-wracking experience, the more so before departure than during the trip. We were jittery and hid our fears with flippant remarks or coarse jokes. "You scared, buddy?" "Me scared? Ha, never! I just crapped in my pants, that's all." Usually, however, we kept quiet, afraid that bravado would reveal too much of our real feelings.

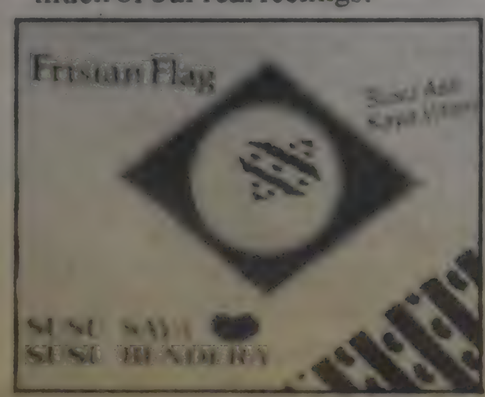

Photo: Ed Vanderkloet
Frisian Flag.

But now, 40 years later, all is peaceful. Before there was hardly a house to be seen but now there are several small villages along the road with friendly *Selamat Datang* (Welcome) signs. The people wave and smile at us and the children shout, "Hello, mister." In most places, however, little or nothing has changed; the rainforest is just as dense and close to the road as before.

We pass a little house and suddenly I spot an enamel sign on it advertising, of all things, milk from the Frisian Flag. I ask my Batak friend to stop so I can take a picture for Bert Witvoet and my other Frisian friends back home. The owners of the house don't mind my use of the camera providing I take a picture of them as well. I get their names and address and promise to send them one.

Cicada by the thousands

Finally we start our descent into Sibolga. We round a steep mountain side and there unrolls before our eyes a spectacular panorama, the glittering Indian Ocean with the town of Sibolga far below. Hairpin turn follows hairpin turn as we wind and twist our way down into town through the same two tunnels I remember so well, and under thundering waterfalls. It's the road on which I learned to drive — and wrecked a jeep on my first try.

Photo: Ed Vanderkloet

Here, too, much has changed. The big lawn in the centre of town now houses a tennis court and several new government buildings. I search for the motel-like building in which our army unit was billeted and, sure enough, it's still there. In fact, it is the very hotel I am looking for. I check in and, miracle of miracles, I get the same room I lived in for eight months in 1949. That evening I sit on the familiar veranda. Just like in the old days, hundreds of bugs and beetles crash into the lamp from the dark outside. Thousands of cicadas drone their piercing hums, and tjitjaks (small lizards) scoot across the ceiling and the walls. It feels as if the years have rolled back.

The hotel has vastly improved. The walls are neatly painted white and everything is squeaky clean. But, due to a malfunctioning of equipment, there is no water in the taps, and the air conditioning doesn't work. And because Sibolga is about the hottest place on earth, I cannot sleep. Even at night the temperature doesn't dip below 30 degrees. The mosquitoes are pesky and there is no klambu (mosquito netting), so I ask the manager for some bug killer. He comes with a large spray can called Baygon and gives my room a thorough treatment. So thorough in fact that I almost perish with the mosquitoes. I decide to let Baygon be bygone and open the door. Bugs are still better than asphyxiation.

Ed Vanderkloet is researcher for the Christian Labour Association of Canada. He lives in Rexdale, Ont.

Photo: Ed Vanderkloet
Traditional Batak house.

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For the time being...

Adrian Peetoom

Text and context

"This Do in Remembrance Of Me." A careful craftsperson had carved these familiar words into the wide overhang of a well-made table. Oak, perhaps. I think "oak," not because I know much about woods, but in my ears it has the ring of eternal beauty, of delicate power. I'm not sure why. Perhaps body language and eager bidding of buyers at auctions have convinced me that I'm in the presence of great value when the auctioneer says "oak."

Because of my work and my interests I have attended a fair number of churches outside my own tradition, and over the years I have seen tables like it, almost always in prime condition, polished to a bright gleam, lovingly set just so in the sanctuary, ready always to carry that always powerful presence of our Lord in the symbols of bread and wine. Some have stood for mere decades, and still others make one think they have been there since about 1669, give or take a hundred years either way.

The one I'm talking about was a perfect beauty. Carvings without flaw, the more lightly finished letters set off by surrounding darker wood; legs and top balanced in immediately pleasing proportions; no scratch anywhere that I could see. How old would it be? How many believers would it have served? How much faith would it have sustained and strengthened?

But this table did not make me content, for it stood in the study of a friend of mine, and it supported a computer. He told me that he had bought it at an auction — for about $25 he added casually, and he liked it a lot. It fit his office, didn't I think?

Inexplicable sorrow

I couldn't reply, except for some polite noises I could barely hear myself produce. My heart was filled with a sorrow that has lasted now for more than six months since I saw it.

My good friend lives in California. He's Jewish (non-practising), a scholar (famous in his field), an author (successful and rich), clever and witty (take my word for it), sensitive about the needs of underdogs (students, parents and the politically powerless), and generous with his possessions. Soon after I arrived he showed me around his large bungalow filled with gorgeous art and beautiful furniture, all tastefully arranged. At the back, his swimming pool is surrounded by an exquisite array of well-cared for trees, shrubs and flowers, amongst which were a grapefruit and an orange tree loaded with large juicy fruit, rich promise for tomorrow's breakfast.

My friend is an academic with a warm heart. Though born poor, he's wealthy now because of his hard work and the success of his teaching and writing. His possessions enrich eye and ear, nose and touch, and are not gathered just to play a "let's impress the neighbours" game. But he seems utterly without consciousness of any faith as far as I can tell, let alone the Christian faith.

So what could I say to this man who has no commitment that would make him reluctant to move around ideas on a table meant for bread and wine? I don't think he would have understood my feelings had I expressed them. My heart would want to object to its current use, but I'm still not sure I may. For to press "my" point would possibly elevate that table to an icon, an object sacred in itself, an oak idol. Ordinary bread and cheap wine become symbols only within a specific setting, and any table can become a communion carrier, when in the place where three or 3,000 are gathered in the name of Christ.

That's what my head told me then and tells me still. And yet ....

Adrian Peetoom is an educational editor and author, and lives in Chatham, Ont.

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Peter and Marja are

Dear P and M:

I have smoked ever since the days that smoking made you a man and the danger of cancer was unheard of. Now, in some churches, the pressure is on for people like me to quit. "A Christian is not supposed to smoke," people tell me. I have tried quitting, but I just become miserable. As long as I don't bother others, am I sinning?

Do we all have to expect perfection in this life? Are Christians' eating habits perfect? Must we lay guilt trips on those who eat fat when they know that their cholesterol level will go up?

Dear Wonderfully Made:

It must be a struggle. You're squeezed between your craving for a cigarette and the pressure to quit from church, society and the health fields. All that tension only increases your dependency on smoking.

Some Christians view this as a spiritual issue. Your question is phrased in theological concepts such as sin, guilt and perfection. We have a hard time with this approach because it's not helpful. After all, there are so many ways in which we fall short of what God wants for us. Smoking, overeating, driving too fast, staying out too late, drinking in excess and living the life of a couch potato are all "sinful." You can't self-righteously isolate any one of these areas as if it is worse than any other.

When someone points an accusing finger our natural impulse is to direct it away from us towards someone else. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on our point of view) the fact that others struggle with different weaknesses doesn't let us off the hook.

Now that we've put you back on the hook, let us suggest a more positive way of dealing with your smoking habit. As Christians we see ourselves as imagebearers of God. This royal view of ourselves leads us to reject anything that harms us. Sometimes we discover that something we thought was harmless is actually dangerous to our well-being. Then we have no choice but to change our lifestyles.

You are wonderfully made and your body must be carefully tended! That biblical self-image is at the heart of a prayerful attempt to break your habit.

Outside pressure can force you into designated smoking areas, but it cannot get you to quit. That has to come from you.

It won't get any easier for smokers. Society has decreed that tobacco will go the way of asbestos, ureaformaldehyde and leaded gas. The main reason is one that Christians can wholeheartedly support: good health!

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Willy Suk-Kleer, Bert Witvoet.

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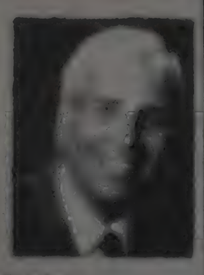

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Poetry

Poetry of Beatrice Vandervelde

Temporality

The sumac had turned scarlet
The oak a burnaby brown
The maple, shades of gold and red

Amid their splendour
You stood naked
Exposed and bare

Your crowning glory lay at your feet
Curled and dry
Windswept

Encounter

He was complaining before I came
But then he turned on me
And such a scolding I've never had:
Eyes boring into mine
Mouth spewing forth venom
Tiny body quivering
Tail frantic, pumping up and down.

I take one step.
Shocked silence!

He scurries higher in the tree
Catching the late evening sun,
Making his fur glow red.
Then gives it to me doublefold:
How DARE you?

I back off, go on my way,
His screeching chatter pushing me
Until the distance swallows it.

Guest

One moment
I walk briskly
In the autumn woods,
Enjoying fresh air,
Delighting in beauty,
Feeling like a queen.

The next
I stop in my tracks.
Ahead a young buck
Feeds lazily.
He raises his royal head;
I am awed at his majesty.

One second our eyes lock.
Then he gathers himself,
And in one mighty leap
Crashes into the woods and is gone.

The path is mine again,
Yet timidly I walk on;
Guest in his domain.

Point of View

"Picking grain?" he asked.

I looked at my bouquet:
Wild oats and barley
A stalk of golden wheat
Weeds from ditch and field.

Seeds of harvest to him;
Flowers of the season to me—
Nature's bounty.
Free!

Morning Walk

Ponytail bobbing,
My long shadow bounces along the road;
While his, after years of marching band,
Glides smoothly along the pavement.
I shorten my step
Hold myself stiff.
Twins now, our stretched images
Ride straight along the center line.

The chill morning air
Nips gently at my face.
White grass melts again to green.

Breathing deeply I forget
As I greet this glorious day:
Again, there's a spring in my step
And my hair nods yes to the sun.

The Tree

You were abuzz
With chirping and twitters,
A rich cacophony of sound.

With one swoosh you exploded.
A hundred, a thousand birds
Filled the sky
Leaving your heaven-stretched arms
Forlorn and lonely.
The wind helped you sigh.

Beatrice Vandervelde lives in Willowdale, Ont.

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Birthday

80th Birthday:
Mr. John van Staalduinen
With praise and thanks to our Lord and heavenly Father, who has done "so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of" (Eph. 3:20). We hope to celebrate on Nov. 18, 1989, the 80th birthday of our father and grandfather

JOHN VAN STAALDUINEN

Dad left Bleiswijk, the Netherlands, on one of the early immigrant boats in March of 1948 with Mom and three small children. He settled in Stoney Creek, Ont., buying a greenhouse business there in 1949. Dad was very active in helping other immigrants get settled in the early 1950s and in the early foundation and growth of the CRC in Classis Hamilton. He was a founding member of the Fruitland CRC and active in it up to 1987. The last seven years Dad has lived alone, presently in Burlington. We thank the Lord for him and how he has used Dad to help build his Kingdom.
You are invited to an open house on Saturday, Nov. 18, 1989, from 2:00 - 4:30 p.m. at the Christopher Terrace Retirement Residence, 3131 New Street, Burlington, ON L7N 3P8.
Best wishes may be addressed to the above address or telephone: (416) 634-4777.
Bill & Grace van Staalduinen — Nepean, Ont.
Kirsten, Dennis, Brent, Sharon
Ray & Dianne van Staalduinen — Burlington, Ont.
Rob, Allen, Michelle, Jonathan, David
Brian & Gerda van Staalduinen — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Duane, Wendy, Brian

Births

JANSSEN-DE WOLF:
Johan and Bernice thank the Lord for his unfailing blessings in the birth of their precious child

ALANA MARTINA

She was born on Aug. 31, 1989. Thankful grandparents are Cor and Mina de Wolf of the Netherlands and Gerrit and Ida Janssen of Tillsonburg, Ont. Proud great-grandmother is "Oma" de Lignie-Schout of the Netherlands.

POSTMAN (nee Schouten):
"Rejoice! Sing Praise to Our Creator!"
With thankfulness to God we, Mark and Judi, announce the birth of our son

BRADNEY JOHN

born on Oct. 11, 1989, weighing 8 lbs. 14½ oz. Proud grandparents are Rev. and Mrs. J.W. Postman and Mr. and Mrs. D. Schouten. Bradney is the fifth great-grandchild for Mrs. Ada Postman and 45th great-grandchild for Mrs. Wilhelmina Vahrmeyer.
Home address: Box 229, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0.

Marriages

BOELENS-TIEMSTRA:
Prov. 3:5-6
Thankful to the Lord who has brought them together we, Menno and Jenny Boelens, announce the marriage of our daughter

KELLY-ANN INGA
to
BERNARD DEAN

son of Clarence and Anna Tiemstra. This celebration of love took place Oct. 21, 1989, at Rabbit Hill Baptist Church, Edmonton, Alta. Rev. Landor Liddell officiated.
Future address: Winnipeg, Man.

KORVEMAKER-KORTEN:
With thanks to the Lord, we, Arend and Diane Korvemaker of Wyoming, Ont., and Albert and Nell Korten of Lucknow, Ont., are pleased to announce the marriage of our children

JUDY
and
JOHN (J.C.)

The ceremony will take place, D.V., on Saturday, Nov. 25, 1989, at 11 a.m. at Wyoming Chr. Ref. Church. Rev. Jerry Van Dyk officiating.

Anniversaries

1964 November 7 1989
With praise and thanksgiving to God, we hope to celebrate the 25th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

BILL and AUDREY TEEUWSEN

Congratulations Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa, and we pray that God will give you many more years together.
With love:
Rick & Linda Batenburg — Beamsville, Ont.
Nicole
Steve Teeuwsen — at home
Sandy Teeuwsen — at home
Allan Teeuwsen — at home
Home address: 55 Longford Cr., St. Catharines, ON L2N 6E7.

Why not place your ad in the Classified pages?

Obituaries

On Oct. 27, 1989, the Lord in his infinite wisdom, suddenly called home, and promoted to glory, his faithful servant and our dear friend of more than 35 years

LEENDERT (Leo) BERGHOUT

May the Lord sustain his wife Maria and their children and grandchildren. May it comfort them to know that thoughts of friends who care are with them at this time. In sympathy and prayer:
Fred & Aartje Hiemstra
Gerry & Diane Kuitert
John & Sena Reitsma
John & Hilke Stam
Dixie Van Dasselaar
Jake & Margaret Vrieswyk

At God's appointed time, yet very suddenly for us, the Lord took to himself our beloved brother, brother-in-law and uncle

GEALE (Gary) DE GRAAF

at the age of 63.
That the Lord may comfort our sister-in-law, children and grandchildren is our prayer. Psalm 103:14-15
Anna & Anne Laanstra — Strathroy, Ont.
Louw & Elly DeGraaf — Wommels, the Neth.
Jim & Anna DeGraaf — Fruitland, Ont.
Sjoukje & Bill Bylsma — Strathroy, Ont.
Tolly Streutker-DeGraaf (deceased) & John Streutker — Woodstock, Ont.
Wiebe DeGraaf (deceased) & Karen DeGraaf — Woodstock, Ont.
nieces and nephews.

"My times are in your hands." (Ps. 31:15)
On Reformation Day, Oct. 31, 1989, the Lord called home into eternal rest his faithful servant and child

NICOLAAS DE LEEUW
DEN BOUTER

in his 71st year.
Cherished brother, uncle and loving granduncle of many who mourn his passing, but "do not mourn as those without hope." His legacy will be his caring love, and loving care. We shall dearly miss him. Funeral services took place on Friday, Nov. 3, 1989, at First Chr. Ref. Church, Kingston, Rev. Carl D. Tuyl officiating. Interment was at Kingston's Cataraqui cemetery.
Fam. de Leeuw den Bouter — the Neth.
Fam. P.G. DeJager — Kingston, Ont.
Fam. N.S.T. DeJager — Kingston, Ont.
Fam. A.J. Boers — Toronto, Ont.

"He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart." (Is. 40:14b)
On Oct. 14, 1989, at the age of almost nine months, the Lord took home a precious little boy, his child

KURT WILLIAM KOOISTRA

He was born with a terminal genetic disorder, and although we are saddened by his death, we also are greatly comforted that he is now with his Lord in perfection. Kurt will be missed by his parents Bill and Rita, and his little sisters Megan and Alyssa. Also by his grandparents: Jim and Alice Kooistra, and John and Joanne Oosterheerd, and his three great-grandparents, many aunts, uncles and cousins.
The funeral service was held in the Chr. Ref. Church of Williamsburg on Oct. 16, 1989, with Rev. Johan Tangelder who spoke on 2 Sam. 12:23b.
Correspondence address: R.R.#1, Williamsburg, ON K0C 2H0.

Obituaries

The Lord took home his child

DIRK NICOLAAS DE LEEUW
DEN BOUTER

We pray that the Lord will strengthen Pieter and Nel DeJager and their family. We will miss Dick as he was a true friend.
Martha & Roelof Wagter
Truus & Frits Timan
Minnie & Lou Kooistra
Grace & Gerrit Vlijm
Hans & Ada Snoek
Dickie & Koert Eikelboom

To friends and all who knew him in Canada. On Thursday, Oct. 26, 1989, the Lord took unto himself our dear son, brother, brother-in-law and uncle

SIMON CORNELIS (Cor) YPMA

at the age of 61.
He was predeceased by his mother in 1971.
Sadly missed by:
His wife Dinie Ypma-Kleinjan — Den Ham (Ov.), the Neth.
Father: Durk Ypma — Den Ham (Ov.), the Neth.
Siemen & Nika Ypma — Meppel, the Neth.
Jenny & Berend Gerrits — Daarle (Ov.), the Neth.
Uke & Menko Postma — Brampton, Ont.
Gre & Jan Hoekjen — Nijverdal the Neth.
Boukje Ypma — Enschede, the Neth.
Sjoerdje Ypma — Almelo, the Neth. and 14 nieces and nephews.
Correspondence address: Molenstraat 23, 7683 VD Den Ham (Ov.), the Netherlands.

Obituaries

Sept. 7, 1926 — Oct. 21, 1989
Eestrum — Beamsville
"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him would not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)
On Saturday, Oct. 21, 1989, the Lord suddenly called home our beloved husband, father and opa

GEALE (Gary) DE GRAAF

at the age of 63.
We thank and praise God for the wonderful testimony his life was to us. We will miss him very much but have great comfort in knowing that he is with our heavenly Father.
He will be lovingly remembered by:
His wife Klaaske (nee Halma)
His children and grandchildren:
Rick & Edith De Graaf
Roberta, Gerald, Simon, Curtis
Jake & Sylvie De Graaf
Virginnia, Stephanie
Lawrence & Helen De Graaf
Carrie Anne, Ryan, David, Jason
Don & Chris De Graaf
Melissa, Laura
Diane & Henry Hultink
Sharon, Darlene
Lambert & Maureen De Graaf
Kristen
Len DeGraaf
The funeral service was held on Wednesday, Oct. 25, 1989, at Providence Chr. Ref. Church, Beamsville. Dr. H. VanderPlaat officiated.
Correspondence address: John St., R.R.#1, Box 3C8, Lot 107, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0.

Help Wanted

CARING FOR KIDS Mutual Support Systems, a residential program for children, is looking for families in the Niagara Peninsula that would provide foster care for a child in their own home. Please reply to:
Mutual Support Systems
R.R.#1, Perry Rd.,
Wellandport, ON
L0R 2J0
(416) 899-2311

Help Wanted

Medium-sized greenhouse operation in Brampton is in need of an **assistant grower/shipper.** Three-bedroom bungalow on property is available. Please contact Andy at (416) 455-8470, Kuyvenhoven Greenhouses Inc.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Established commercial printer seeks person experienced in all aspects of printing trade. Position involves paste-up, stripping, camera work and bindery. Working knowledge of equipment and several years experience a must. Good benefits package and immediate start offered. Send resume and references to:

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P.O. Box 7257, Ancaster, ON L9G 3N6
(416) 648-8720

Dordt College

Chemistry Faculty Opening

Tenure track for fall 1990. May be a physical, inorganic or analytical chemist but should be willing to teach physical chemistry, in addition to other chemistry courses.

PhD required. Experience preferred.

Qualified individuals who are committed to a biblical, Reformed theology and educational perspective are invited to send resume, academic credentials, and references to:

Dr. Douglas Ribbens
Vice Pres. for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
Sioux Center, IA 51250

Dordt College is an equal opportunity employer.

Classified/Events

Real Estate

Business opportunity
Health forces sale of this booming delicatessen and specialty foods operation located in Bowmanville, Ont. This is a successful family-run business established for 30 years and needs a young aggressive person or persons. Doing a large volume and showing great profits. Asking only $98,500 for equipment and goodwill. Call Tony Klompmaker for further details.
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Moving to or from Thunder Bay?
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(807) 577-4810
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Midwest Realty Limited
(807) 623-7404

Teachers

TABER, Alta.: Taber Christian School, operated by the Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta, will need a **Grade 1** teacher beginning in January 1990. Interested applicants should contact: Henry Ronda, Principal, Box 2256, Taber, AB T0K 2G0. Tel. (403) 223-4550.

Miscellaneous

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L2W 1A1

Teachers

Kindergarten teacher wanted

Calvin Christian School in Drayton, Ont., has an opening for a Kindergarten teacher from December 4, 1989, to June 29, 1990. The position has become available due to a maternity leave. Please send letter of application and resume to:

Mr. A.J. Vanderstoel, Principal
Calvin Christian School
Box 141, 35 High St., Drayton, ON N0G 1P0
Tel.: (519) 638-2935 (school)
(519) 638-3606 (home)

London District Christian Secondary School

We require two teachers to fill maternity leaves beginning **Jan. 8, 1990.** One is required for a **Mathematics** position and the other is required for a combination **French/English** position. There is a good possibility that both positions would become permanent during the second semester. Please send your letter of application, resume, and a personal statement of your faith commitment to:

Mr. H. Kooy, Principal
c/o London District Chr. Sec. School
24 Braesyde Ave., London, ON N5W 1V3
Phone (519) 455-4360

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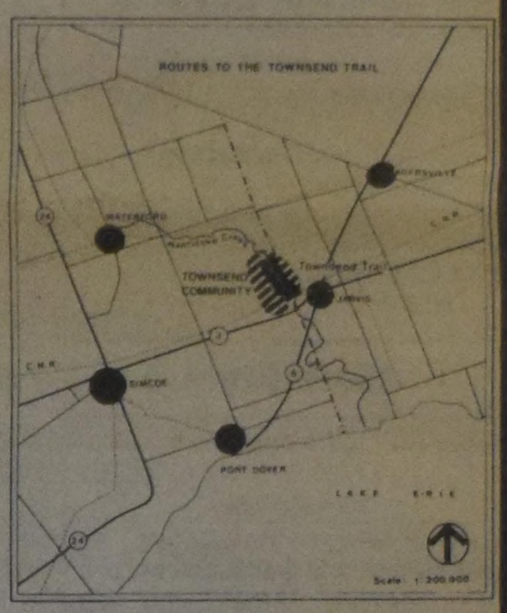
Real Estate

Brookview Home
A Senior Citizen Apartment
Information Meeting:
Saturday, November 18, 1989
1-5 p.m.

The Board of Nanticoke Christian Senior Citizen Home Inc. have developed plans to expand their Townsend Retirement Village. Construction will start soon in building a 38 unit apartment complex, a 28 unit retirement lodge and a large amenities building. The apartment units will be leased on a pre-paid life lease plan with both one bedroom and two bedroom units available. To view these plans and to learn more about the life-lease concept attend the information meeting at the existing Valleyview Home in Townsend, near Jarvis, anytime between 1 and 5 p.m. on Nov. 18. Refreshments will be served. If you're interested in an apartment unit don't delay as they will be available on a first come first serve basis. For more details call:

Fred Hagen, Broker
(416) 679-6666
or
John Stam, Sales Rep.
(416) 768-1519 (res.)



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Events

Christian Reformed Alliance Workshop

Invited: Every present and former office-bearer in the Christian Reformed Church who shares our concern for the denomination and the formation of an Alliance of Churches.
Purpose: To update the progress of the proposed Alliance and to discuss the nature and structure of the Alliance in preparation for the Founding Convention.

Saturday, November 18, 1989
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Coffee and registration [$10] from 9:30 - 10 a.m.
(no pre-registration required)

Calvin Christian Reformed Church of Dundas
420 Highway 5 West, 3 miles West of Clappisons Corners

Clip & Save:

Hollandse Diensten
in de
Ancaster Christian Reformed Church
aanvang 3:00 n.m.

26 nov. — Ds. Henry De Moor
24 dec. — Ds. Jacob Kuntz (Kerstdienst)

Ancaster CRC, 70 Highway 53 East, Ancaster, Ontario

Events

CCRCC Biennial Meeting

The Christian Reformed Church of Willowdale, Ont., calls on the Canadian classes of the Christian Reformed Churches to attend the biennial meeting of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC).

The meeting will be in session, the Lord willing, from Tuesday, November 14, 1989, at 2 p.m. until Friday, November 17, 1989.

A public conference, co-sponsored by the Council of Reformed Churches in Canada and the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, will be held prior to the biennial meeting, from Monday, November 13 at 2 p.m. until Tuesday, November 14 at noon.

Topic of the conference will be:

"The Christian Church and Canada's Aboriginal Peoples."

The public is invited to the conference as well as the council sessions.

Churches are asked to remember the conference and meeting of council in their congregational prayers the Sunday preceding the council meetings.

The meetings will be held at the Willowdale Christian Reformed Church.

Events

CCRCC CONFERENCE

You are invited to join delegates to the meeting of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in an open conference about: **The Christian Church and Aboriginal People in Canada.**
Keynote speaker: Rev. Stanley McKay Jr., Indian Christian Minister and Teacher

Workshops on traditional spirituality, treaties, racism, and the church in the light of the gospel with **Rev. Hendrik DeBruyn, Rev. Menno Wiebe, and Mr. John Olthuis.**
Monday, Nov. 13, 2 p.m. until Tuesday, Nov. 14, noon.
at: Willowdale Christian Reformed Church
70 Hilda Ave., Willowdale, ON
Registration $10.00

'THE CHORALIERS'

Christian Male Chorus
of
Brampton and District
presents
a

Fall Concert

with guest performers

Saturday, Nov. 18, 1989
8:00 p.m.

Second Brampton CRC (Steeles/McLaughlin)

Everyone welcome — No admission charge

Calendar of Events

Nov. 10-12 Second conference of the Can. Assoc. for the Advancement of Netherlandic Studies in **Waterloo,** Ont. Highlights: film about resistance movement and organ concert by Dr. Barrie Cabena. For info. call Corry Derksen at (519) 893-5767.

Nov. 11 Concert of chamber music by pianist Mary VanderVennen, violinist Mara Westerblom and cellist Patricia Hiemstra, together with a dance performance by Gioia Seerveld. At 8 p.m., Grace CRC, **Scarborough,** Ont. Admission $10.

Nov. 11 The choirs and brass of the Ontario Christian Music Assembly, directed by Leendert Kooij, present a "Christian Festival Concert," at 8 p.m. in **Toronto's** famous Roy Thomson Hall. The concert will also feature organists Andre Knevel and Klaas Jan Mulder, as well as soprano Etty van der Mei. For info. and tickets call (416) 636-9779.

Nov. 17 Ambassadors' 20th anniversary concert at 8 p.m., Central Presbyterian Church, 165 Charlton St. W., **Hamilton,** Ont. For tickets call (416) 389-2104 or contact members.

Nov. 17-19 Tenth Annual Fall Conference of Christian Reformed Singles. At Five Oakes Centre, **Paris,** Ont. Keynote speaker: Pastor Peter Slofstra from St. Catharines. Registration deadline is Sept. 5 ($5.00 late filing fee). For info. call (519) 453-5444 or 455-7109.

Nov. 17 Classis Hamilton Chapter of C.C.M. meets at 8 p.m., Mount Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton,** Ont. Speaker: Dr. N. De Jong of Trinity College on: "Are the creeds still relevant for today?"

Nov. 17-Dec. 15 "Deconstruction - Reconstruction," an exhibit of works by well-known Canadian artist Gerard Pas. At Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. For info. call (416) 648-2131.

Nov. 18 Organ concert by Thomas Fitches at 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **Bowmanville,** Ont. Tickets $5 at the door.

Nov. 18 Giant bazaar and auction of John Calvin Chr. School and Woodland Christian High starting 1:30 p.m., First CRC, **Guelph,** Ont.

Nov. 18 50th anniversary celebration of the Back to God Hour with Dr. Joel Nederhood. Massed choir and special music: at 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **Woodstock,** Ont.

Nov. 18 Bazaar at Calvin Memorial Chr. School, **St. Catharines,** Ont. Doors open at 10 a.m. Something for everyone!

Nov. 18 Ambassador's 20th anniversary concert in Maranatha CRC, **Cambridge,** Ont. at 8 p.m.

Nov. 24 Meeting of self-help group for surviving spouses at 8 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.

Nov. 25 Shalom Manor's Tea and Craft Sale, from 2-4 p.m. at Shalom Manor, **Grimsby,** Ont.

Dec. 1 "Sing Noel," a Stained Glass Concert with Boris Brott and the Amadeus Orchestra, featuring Stuart Laughton, trumpeter, and the Redeemer College Choir. At 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Pre-concert lecture at 7 p.m. For tickets call (416) 648-2131.

Dec. 2 Choir and organ concert by Leendert Kooy's O.C.M.A., with organist Andre Knevel. At 8 p.m. St. Paul's Anglican Church, (Dundas and Wellington), **Woodstock,** Ont. For tickets call (519) 539-0855.

Dec. 2 Organ recital by John Wm. Vandertuin at St. James Anglican Church, **Brantford,** Ont.

Dec. 2 50th anniversary Jubilee service of the Back to God Hour at 7:30 p.m. in the CRC, **New Westminster,** B.C. Speaker: Dr. Joel Nederhood.

Dec. 2 "Adopt-A-Con" organizational and instructional meeting from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at John Knox Christian School, 82 McLaughlin Rd. S., **Brampton,** Ont. Bring your own lunch.

Dec. 3 & 10 "Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst" at 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Reformed Church, 170 Clarke St., **Woodstock,** Ont.

Dec. 9 Christmas concert by three London choirs plus Andre Knevel at the organ. At 7:30 p.m., Dundas St. Centre United Church, **London,** Ont.

Dec. 11 Public debate between Andrew Kuyvenhoven and Robert Godfrey on the topic: "The state of health of the CRC" at 8 p.m., Redeemer College Auditorium, **Ancaster,** Ont. Sponsored by CCM of the CRC. For info. call Mark Zylstra at (416) 562-5196.

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Correction
Cand. Stephen Sytsma did *not* accept a call to Cornwall, Ont., as reported in C.C. Oct. 13.

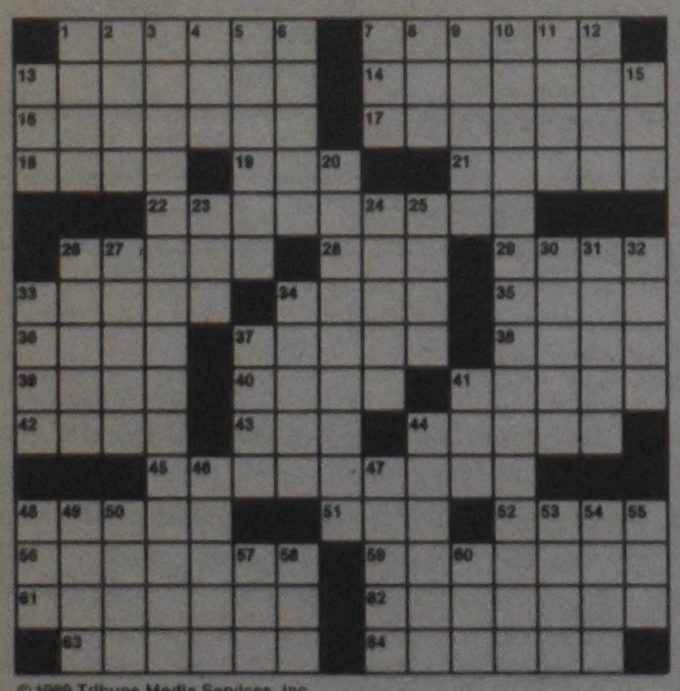
Calvinist Contact regrets the error and apologizes for any inconvenience it may have caused.

New address
First Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton: P.O. Box 9165, Postal Stn. E., Edmonton, AB T5P 4K2.

New clerk
First CRC of Edmonton: L. (Bert) Nyboer; use church address above. Phone (403) 484-1037.

Weekly puzzle

by Robert O. Wilson



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ACROSS
1 Become visible
7 Rubbed
13 Distribute in a way
14 Soldier protection
16 Extra pages
17 Stamen parts
18 Kiddies
19 One: Ger.
21 Goddess of peace
22 TVA word
26 Puppeteer Bil
28 — Na Na
29 Require
33 Ties
34 Measures of heat: abbr.
35 "To — and to hold..."
36 Against
37 Stops
38 Uniform
39 Keyed up
40 Buffalo's waterfront
41 Grandstand sections
42 Ms Anderson
43 Sea bird
44 Fall guy
45 Messages
48 Ind. state
51 Light source
52 Yearling
56 Session
59 Bullfight participant
61 Released prisoner
62 EPA concern
63 City on the Rio Grande
64 Organic compounds

DOWN
1 Florence's river
2 Starting gate
3 Magician
4 Corn unit
5 Be present
6 Varnish base
7 Man of figures
8 Solo of "Star Wars"
9 Bandleader Shaw
10 Thermometer's guide
11 Fencing sword
12 Actor Bruce
13 "The — and the Pendulum"
15 Half a fly
20 Young birds
23 Hesitatory sounds
24 Novelist Nevil
25 Talk back
26 Board game
27 Composer Dvorak
30 Roof edges
31 — which way
32 Studies
33 False idol
34 Wilkes—
37 Cad
41 Headgear
44 Loses control
46 M. Zola
47 Coin of India
48 Elec. unit
49 Signet
50 Antitoxins
53 Fragrance
54 Fireplace food
55 Put to the test
57 A Beatty
58 Earth: pref.
60 Canvas bed

Last week's puzzle

F	U	D	D		A	L	A	S		S	A	U	C	E
A	B	I	E		C	A	G	E		E	X	T	O	L
L	O	S	S		E	N	I	D		R	E	A	M	S
L	A	P	P	S		A	N	G	L	E		M	O	E
S	T	O	O	L	P	I	G	E	O	N	S			
		S	T	O	L				T	E	E	T	E	R
O	P	A		A	U	D	I	O				L	E	N
R	O	B	I	N	G	O	O	D	F	E	L	L	O	W
C	O	L	T			T	U	D	O	R		E	S	S
A	L	E	C	T	O				R	A	S	P		
			H	A	W	K	E	Y	E	S	T	A	T	E
S	R	O		T	E	N	S	E		F	A	T	I	N
L	I	M	I	T		E	T	A	L		G	N	A	T
A	L	I	C	E		L	E	S	E		E	I	R	E
M	E	T	E	R		L	E	T	S		S	C	A	R

Finally it's here!

You always longed to have an organ for yourself, an organ that sounds like the one in church, right? Well it's now possible. This organ is built for church or for your home. Thanks to "sampled wave processing" which means that the sound of organ pipes have been digitally recorded note by note. The organ then plays back actual pipe sounds. The sound is so close to pipe that on a recording it would be virtually impossible to tell from the real thing. No rhythm, whistles or drums, just good organ sound. Come in and play it, you will be convinced the same as I am.

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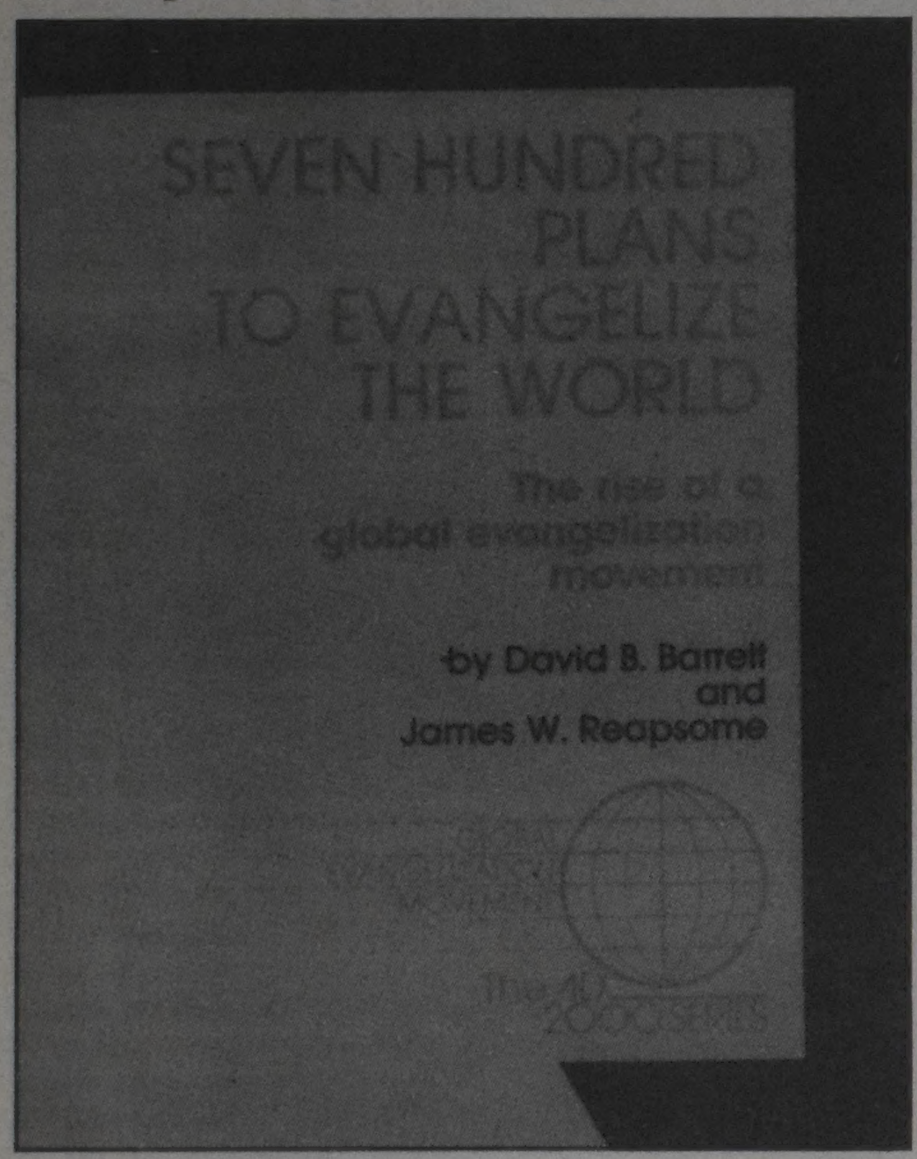
Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Evangelism

Everybody has a plan



Seven Hundred Plans to Evangelize the World, by David Barrett and James Reapsome. Birmingham, Ala.: New Hope Publishers, 1988. $6.95 U.S. Reviewed by Jay Gary for World Evangelization.

We live in an age when a host of world organizations, some political, others humanitarian are pursuing global strategies. Examples of non-governmental groups are the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization or the International Literacy Organization. Now a first-class research study has been produced on Christian groups which likewise have global intentions and are planning for evangelization on a global scale.

Seven Hundred Plans to Evangelize the World, has turned heads from Nairobi to New York.

This eye-opening study begins by tracing the 788 distinct global plans produced by Christians in response to the Great Commission over the past 20 centuries. These have originated in practically every confession and tradition and in more than 70 different countries across the globe. This comprehensive study offers fresh incentive that no global plan needs to be an island in the worldwide body of Christ.

Sobering discoveries reveal that 400 of history's plans were begun only to fizzle out like damp firewood after an average of five years. However, more than 250 plans are alive today and making phenomenal progress across the world. Over 70 of these are "megaplans," stewarding colossal resources of personnel, finance and logistics. More than a fourth of these have announced the year 2000 as a deadline.

A surprising fact revealed that almost a third of the global plans being launched in our day are coming from the Third World.

Successive chapters deal with massive trends today and their relationship to the AD 2000 movement: Third-World missions, outreach to closed countries, non-residential missionaries, computer networking, and the new responses these developments demand. Barrett devotes a whole chapter on how global plans need to segment the unevangelized world and then slips in the most comprehensive global figures on unreached peoples yet published. As if this were not enough, nine detailed appendixes present the total data on the 788 global plans, including plan titles, addresses, contact persons, and telephone numbers for those who want to go further.

Shatters stereotype

For the careful reader, *Seven Hundred Plans* offers a virtual gold-mine of fresh new information on world evangelization which tend to shatter stereotypes. In one table, Barrett lists 340 factors which have been the undoing of global plans in the past. This landmark study culminates more than 11 months of original research undertaken by David Barrett on global AD 2000 plans in preparation for the "Global Consultation on World Evangelization by AD 2000 and Beyond" in Singapore, January of this year.

Seven Hundred Plans isn't the last word on the subject of global planning for evangelization, but few will match its research base. The way is now open for others to offer their suggestions on how global plans should co-operate more closely in strategic planning, in monitoring their progress against stated goals, and in serving national task forces.

This book should be read by all those engaged in planning for evangelization at the denominational, national, confessional or international levels; especially those who are considering leading their agency to set AD 2000 goals.

In an age where communications and technology have made the globe seem a little smaller, *Seven Hundred Plans to Evangelize the Word* promises to make a distinct contribution to those who consider the world their parish.

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The earth is the Lord

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the wor who live in it." **(Psalm 24:1)**

J.B.S. Haldane was a British biochemist who died i He was widely read and had a keen sense of perceptio used to come to him for simple explanations of profou mysteries. Once a well-known theologian asked him, are you able to say about the character of God, now that you've studied his creation?"

"Well," said Haldene, "He seems to have an inordinate fondness for beetles!"

Do you see what I see?

What do you see when you look at the world around?

Stephen W. Hawking's book, *A Brief History of Time,* has been on best-seller lists for over a year now. Dr. Hawking is a tiny man, all scrunched up in a wheelchair by a strange and debilitating disease. His body is twisted out of shape and often useless for the simplest tasks in life. But his mind is free and powerful, and from his wheelchair he travels the universe, unraveling mysteries of time and space.

"Why was the universe formed?" asked Ric Dolphin of *Maclean's* magazine.

"If I knew that," replied Hawking, "there would be nothing else to find out. I would know the mind of God ...!"

The mind of God

What do you know of the mind of God?

"God is really only another artist," said Picasso. "He invented the giraffe, the elephant and the cat. He has no real style; He just goes on trying other things."

"God is a sort of burglar," said Sir Herbert Beerbohn Tree. "As a young man you knock him down; as an old man you try to conciliate him, because he may knock you down!"

"God seems to have left the receiver off the hook," writes Arthur Koestler, "and time is running out."

Do you know God?

The King of Glory

David's experience of God is something different. It's the amazed shout of joy that happens on a beautiful morning as the colours shimmer in early dawn. "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it!" he sings with gusto.

But it's more than just an emotional outburst, a passing exuberance, a peak psychological experience. He stands above Jerusalem wondering aloud whether the God of great glory notices him (vs. 3). Why, indeed, should a God of glory pay attention to any of us?

For one reason; for one reason only. Because God *chooses* to! Psalm 24 is the song sung as the Ark of the Covenant enters Jerusalem. The ancient doors, long closed in foreboding, long darkened with dread and deceit, swing wide (verses 7-10), and the royal throne of the King of Glory enters in triumph. The God who holds the worlds in the palm of his hand sets up housekeeping with his people in Jerusalem! God chooses to care!

There's a modern song that puts it like this:

He rides the wild heavens, he strides through the sea;
The high mountains tremble to hear his decree!
His voice with great thundering sounds from above,
Yet to his dear children, he whispers his love!
His power is great, and will ever endure;
His wisdom is peaceable, gentle, and pure!
But greater than all these wonders I see
Is the glorious promise that he cares for me!

And that's why life matters. Not just church on Sunday. Not just devotions and Bible reading. But all of life! Even beetles!

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

DUE
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